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Relative Deprivation and Ghetto Riots

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RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND
"
GHETTO RIOTS

A Thesis

Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Government
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

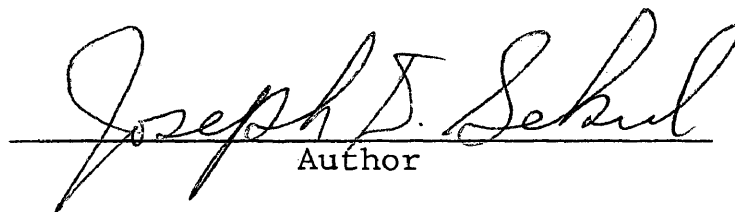
by
Joseph D. Sekul

1976

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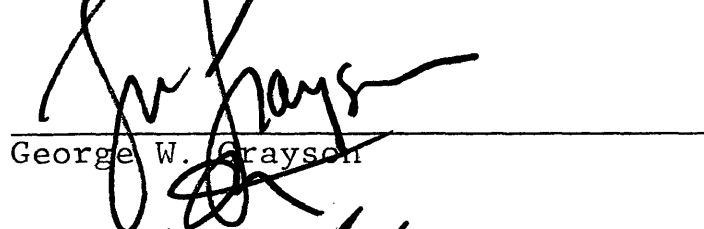
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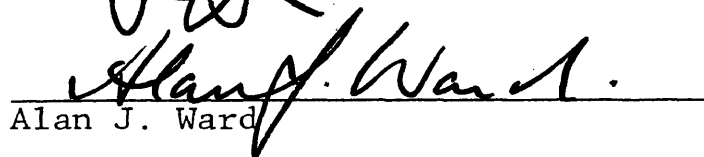
Master of Arts


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Approved, August 1976


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DEDICATION

To Diane

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to test Ted Robert Gurr's relative deprivation theory of political violence. The basic premise of the theory is that objective levels of material and social well-being do not determine men's willingness to engage in violence against the state. Rather, it is how people view their actual attainments relative to their expected attainments that motivates them to rebel.

An assessment of Gurr's own tests of his theory found the results inconclusive. His use of a multi-nation sample forced Gurr to measure deprivation in very general terms that left it unclear whether his results supported a relative deprivation theory, or whether they were equally consistent with a rival misery model which held objective deterioration in popular welfare to be the basis of civil unrest.

In the hope of resolving this ambiguity, the author chose the ghetto riots which took place in the United States between 1964 and 1968 as the setting for tests of a new relative deprivation model. The strategy was that, by limiting attention to a single country, it would be possible to measure deprivation in sufficient detail to set it apart from alternate concepts.

Statistical tests of the new model provided strong evidence to refute Gurr's theory.

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND
GHETTO RIOTS

INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to test a theory of political violence. The theory was formulated by Ted Robert Gurr who hypothesizes that a sense of relative deprivation is a necessary precondition for the occurrence of collective violence of any kind, including political violence.¹ The basic premise of Gurr's relative deprivation argument is that simple or absolute losses of valued social goods are insufficient to motivate people to commit acts of violence. Rather, it is necessary that such losses be perceived as unjustified relative to some standard of justice. It is this perception of a discrepancy between notions of what people ought to have and what they do have--what Gurr terms "relative deprivation"--that leads to

¹Ted Robert Gurr, "A Causal Model of Civil Strife: A Comparative Analysis Using New Indices," American Political Science Review, LXII (December, 1968); see also Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970); and, Ted Robert Gurr with Charles Ruttenberg, The Condition of Civil Violence: First Tests of a Causal Model (Princeton, N.J.: Center For International Studies, 1967).

strife, and not simple declines in well-being. The links in the causal chain between relative deprivation and violence are the emotional states of frustration and then anger that flow from a sense of relative deprivation.

While Gurr asserts that the results of his own tests provide strong support for his theory, the manner in which the key concept (relative deprivation) is operationalized leads one to question this claim. Apart from the fact that no direct measures were used for the "state of mind" variables of frustration and anger, the index constructed for relative deprivation was based largely on the type of political and economic deprivations that would be equally appropriate for an index of absolute deprivation. Hence it remains an open question as to whether the results cited by Gurr as providing confirmation for his relative deprivation model are not equally consistent with an absolute deprivation model.

This inconclusiveness could have been avoided if Gurr had specified which of three distinct types of relative deprivation models obtained in each of the 114 cases in his cross-national sample. At least two of the models are sufficiently diverse in their objectively measureable properties to distinguish them from absolute deprivation

models; test results consistent with one of the two relative deprivation models could not easily be regarded as consistent with an absolute deprivation model. Gurr, however, chose not to follow this procedure, working instead with the very broad index of deprivation mentioned above.

A need therefore exists for studies in which the relevant deprivation models are defined in sufficient detail to set them apart from their alternatives. It is to meet this need that the present study was conceived. The study focuses on the ghetto riots which took place in the United States between 1964 and 1968. Based on a survey of conditions affecting blacks in the years prior to the riots, a "progressive" relative deprivation model was constructed and tested. A progressive model is one in which a steady upward improvement in objective conditions is the "normal" expectation; the impetus to violence comes when expectations of improvement are not met. With certain modifications, this model seemed most appropriate in light of the growth in black incomes and educational attainments in the decade prior to the riots.² This

²The Kerner Commission pointed out that between 1947 and 1966 the number of blacks earning an annual

progressive relative deprivation model is clearly distinct from an absolute deprivation model, the latter premised on a real decline in positively valued goods and conditions.

In addition to relative deprivation, four other independent variables were defined. They were: police department size, welfare expenditures, government expenditures, and prior riots. The dependent variable was riot magnitude. The model was tested by means of regression analysis. Cities with a population of one-hundred-thousand or greater in 1950 were chosen as the units of analysis. Originally 169 such cities were selected. However, insufficient data on a large number necessitated falling back on a sample of seventy some cities in the final tests of the regression model.

The study is divided into three parts. The Gurr model is presented and its deficiencies discussed in the

income of \$7,000 and over had gone from 7 percent to 28 percent. (The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders [New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968], p. 252.) And Sears and McConahay noted that, while in 1940 black men aged 25 to 29 averaged only 6.5 years of education, in 1962 they averaged 11 years of schooling. (David O. Sears and John B. McConahay, The Politics of Violence: The New Urban Blacks and the Watts Riot [Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973], p. 19.)

first chapter. In Chapter Two, the progressive deprivation model thought to represent best the basis of black discontent is developed. In the third chapter the model is operationalized, and the results of the regression analysis are presented.

The conclusion reached is that relative deprivation, as defined in this study, is not related to ghetto rioting.

CHAPTER I

THE GENESIS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Opinions differ on the conditions that launch men into violent struggle against the state. Marx and Engels adopted the intuitively appealing view that men strike out at established authority after economic conditions have deteriorated beyond endurance. In the Communist Manifesto they painted a picture of the progressive misery of the industrial laborer that would be the groundwork for the coming revolution:

The modern labourer . . . instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism developes more rapidly than population and wealth. . . . (A) workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race.¹

Eric Hoffer, on the other hand, doubted the capacity of men to rise up in anger under the weight of such

¹Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. by Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), pp. 341; 345.

crushing burdens.

Where people toil from sunrise to sunset for a bare living, they nurse no grievances and dream no dreams. . . . To be engaged in a desperate struggle for food and shelter is to be wholly free from a sense of futility. The goals are concrete and immediate. Every meal is a fulfillment; to go to sleep on a full stomach is a triumph; and every windfall a miracle.²

Observations made by two other students of revolution support Hoffer. Alexis de Tocqueville pointed out that the French Revolution of 1789 was not preceded by a pattern of growing misery. Rather, "the French found their condition the more unsupportable in proportion to its improvement." He went on to argue that in general, "Revolutions are not always brought about by a decline from bad to worse The regime which is destroyed is almost always an improvement on its immediate predecessor."³ After his study of five revolutions, Crane Brinton came to a similar conclusion: "Our revolutions did not occur

²Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966), pp. 32-33.

³Alexis de Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution (New York: Harper, 1856), p. 214. Quoted in James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," in When Men Revolt and Why, ed. by James C. Davies (New York: The Free Press, 1971), p. 135.

in societies undergoing widespread and long-term economic misery or depression."⁴

Although these two views appear to contradict one another, James Davies feels that they can be reconciled, "if they are juxtaposed and put in the proper time sequence."⁵ According to Davies,

Revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversal. The all important effect on the minds of people in a particular society is to produce, during the former period, an expectation of continued ability to satisfy needs--which continue to rise--and, during the latter, a mental state of anxiety and frustration when manifest reality breaks away from anticipated reality. The actual state of socioeconomic development is less significant than the expectation that past progress, now blocked, can and must continue in the future.⁶

Figure 1 graphically depicts the above pattern of developments. Expressed in other terms, frustrated hope, not hopeless despair brings on revolution.

Davies' identification of frustration as the link between objective social developments and revolution, served as the point of departure for Ted Robert Gurr in

⁴Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. 29.

⁵Davies, When Men Revolt and Why, p. 135.

⁶Ibid.

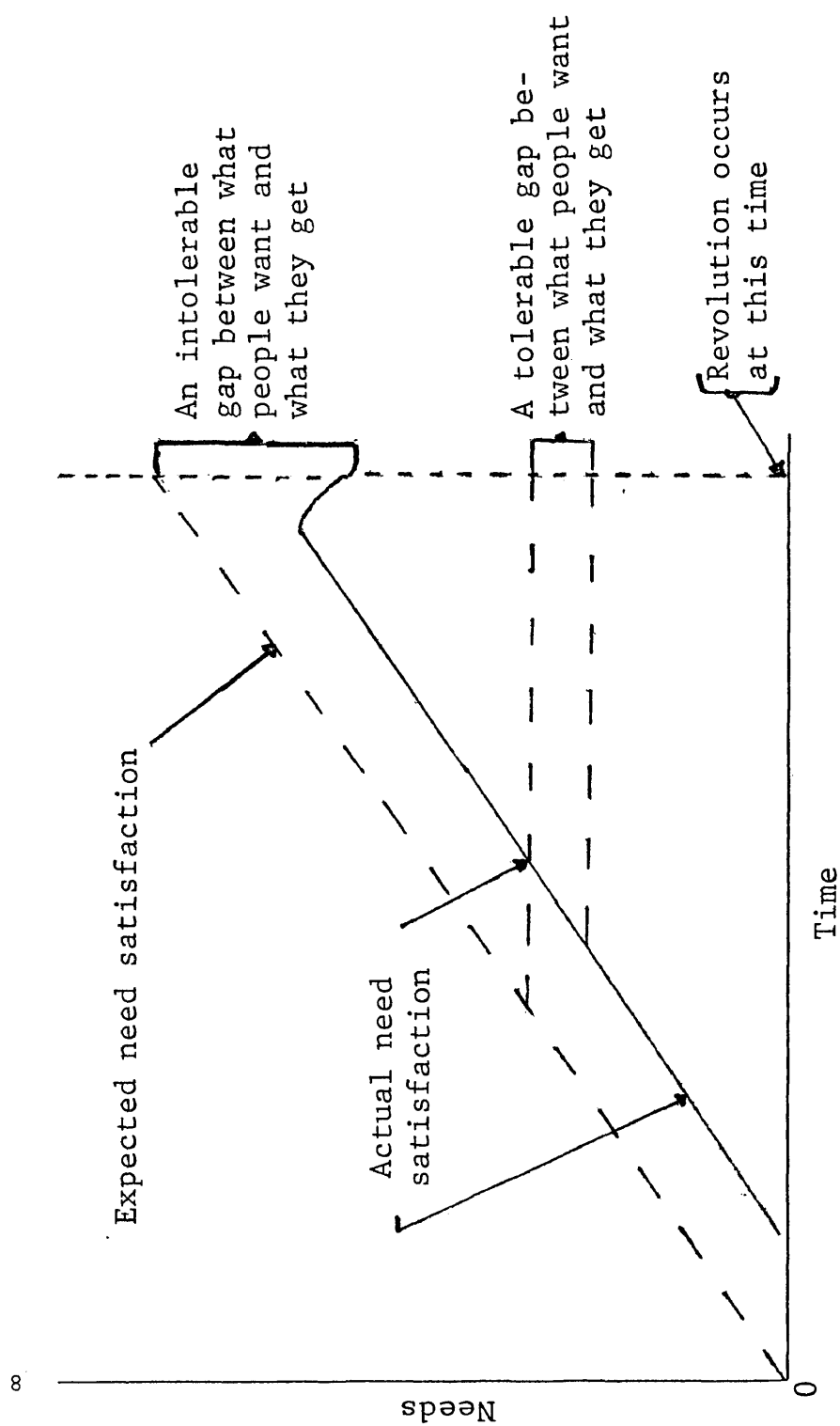


Fig. 1.--Need Satisfaction and Revolution⁷

⁷ Ibid.

the formulation of his own theory of political violence. Gurr builds on Davies' work by retaining his insight that frustration grows out of unmet expectations, and then expanding on Davies' model--commonly referred to as the "J-Curve" model--in three ways: First, Gurr seeks to explain all forms of political violence, not just full-scale revolutions. Second, Davies' association between revolutions and prior frustrations is set on a firmer footing by relating it to an established theory in psychology. Whereas Davies simply assumes that frustrations are sufficient to explain revolutions, Gurr seeks justification for the relationship by drawing on research done by experimental psychologists on the relationship between frustration and violent behavior. From their work he derives the concept of relative deprivation, seen by him as the socio-political counterpart of frustration. Relative deprivation stands as the key explanatory variable in Gurr's theory; it is proposed as a necessary precondition for political violence. Finally, Gurr broadens Davies' notion of a gap between needs and expectations to cover any situation in which expectations significantly exceed actual gratifications, not just those in which previously rising needs satisfactions suddenly decline relative to

need expectations. Gurr's theory, in short, encompasses the J-Curve model, but includes other patterns of discontent as well.⁸ Notwithstanding these differences between Gurr and Davies, a general argument is common to both: the key to explaining violent unrest is not the severity of social conditions, but their potential for evoking intense feelings of frustration, anxiety and discontent; and, that potential derives from what people have relative to what they expected. Interestingly enough, Davies points out that Marx himself came to this conclusion in works written after the Communist Manifesto. In one of those later works Marx described the preconditions of widespread unrest in the following terms.

A noticeable increase in wages presupposes a rapid growth of productive capital. The rapid growth of productive capital brings about an equally rapid growth of wealth, luxury, social wants, social enjoyments. Thus, although the enjoyments of the workers have risen, the social satisfaction that they give has fallen in comparison with the increased enjoyments of the worker . . . Our desires and pleasures spring from society; we measure them, therefore, by society and not by the objects which serve for their

⁸Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), Passim, Chaps. 1-2.

satisfaction. Because they are of a social nature, they are of a relative nature.⁹

Let us now take a closer look at Gurr's theory. First, Gurr's definitions and explanations of the concepts of political violence and relative deprivation will be examined. Second, three models formulated by Gurr to describe how a sense of relative deprivation develops under particular sets of social circumstances will be discussed. Finally, an assessment will be made of Gurr's efforts to provide empirical support for his theory through statistical analysis.

Why Men Rebel: Relative Deprivation
and Political Violence

Gurr seeks to explain all forms of political violence. Taken literally, political violence could encompass violence initiated by government elites and directed against the citizenry at large. However, Gurr excludes this kind of governmental violence, and limits the concept of violence whose target is the "political regime":

Political violence refers to all collective attacks within a political community against the political

⁹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Wage Labour and Capital," Selected Works in Two Volumes (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955), I, p. 94. Quoted in Davies, When Men Revolt and Why, p. 135.

regime, its actors--including competing political groups as well as incumbents--or its policies . . . The concept subsumes revolution, ordinarily defined as fundamental sociopolitical change accomplished through violence. It also includes guerilla wars, coups d'état, rebellions, and riots.¹⁰

Political violence is presented as a sub-set of collective violence, which Gurr never really defines except to indicate that it is violence by collectivities directed against agents having nothing to do with the political system. Collective violence becomes political violence when men's "attitudes and beliefs focus it on political objects, and when institutional frameworks are weak enough, or opposition strong enough to give the discontented a sense of potency."¹¹ Collective violence in turn can be subsumed under aggressive behavior in general, whether initiated by individuals or by groups. Under Gurr's schema, it follows that theories which explain aggression can also be used to explain collective and political violence.

¹⁰Gurr, Why Men Rebel, pp. 3-4.

¹¹Ibid., p. 155.

Frustration and Aggression

There are at least three distinguishable psychological assumptions about the sources of human aggression, according to Gurr: "That aggression is solely instinctive, that it is solely learned; or that it is an innate response activated by frustration."¹² While the first two assumptions are not rejected entirely, Gurr feels that frustration theory is better supported by empirical research, and therefore more persuasive.

Frustration is defined as "an interference with goal-directed behavior"; aggression "is behavior designed to injure, physically or otherwise, those toward whom it is directed."¹³ The link between frustration and aggression is held to be deeply rooted in man's nature: "The disposition to respond aggressively when frustrated is part of man's biological makeup; there is a biologically inherent tendency, in men and animals, to attack the frustrating agent."¹⁴ The basic postulate on the relationship between frustration and aggression was formulated by

¹²Ibid., p. 31.

¹³Ibid., p. 33

¹⁴Ibid.

John Dollard and his colleagues at Yale in 1939. According to them, "the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrawise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression."¹⁵ The second half of this postulate has come in for considerable attack, the counterargument being that other responses to frustration besides aggression are possible, including withdrawal, evasion, and, in the case of children, regression in the form of lowered intellectual performance.

Whether these alternate responses are forthcoming depends on other factors which interact with frustrations. Leonard Berkowitz, for example, argues that the drive of anger, aroused by frustration, does not necessarily

lead to specific behavior (aggression in this case) unless there are appropriate cues or releasers. These cues are stimuli bearing some degree of association with the anger instigator . . . A frustration creates a predisposition to make hostile responses by arousing anger. Whether these responses are actually performed, however, depends in part upon the presence of suitable aggression-evoking cues.¹⁶

¹⁵ John Dollard, et al., Frustration and Aggression (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1939), p. 1.

¹⁶ Leonard Berkowitz, Aggression: A Social Psychological Analysis (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1962), p. 33.

Fear is another qualifying factor. While anger predisposes people to strike out against the source of frustration, fear of the consequences may hold the attack in check.¹⁷ Also learning can serve to inhibit aggression. Some may have learned to redouble their efforts in the face of their wishes being thwarted; others to suppress violent impulses because they are out of keeping with a moral code.

Gurr accepts the validity of these and other criticisms when made in support of the proposition that aggression is not the only possible effect of frustration.¹⁸ However, he argues that they must be put in proper perspective: "These findings and observations are qualifications of the basic frustration-aggression thesis, not refutations of it."¹⁹ The frustration aggression mechanism remains "a motivating force that disposes men to

¹⁷Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 35.

¹⁸In fact Gurr argues that the authors of the original Yale study made sufficiently clear in the second half of their work that they never intended to imply that aggression was the only possible response to frustration. Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 33.

¹⁹Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 34.

aggression."²⁰ Granted certain factors can modify the basic impulse to aggression, their so doing does not constitute sufficient grounds for completely disregarding the frustration aggression syndrome, any more than factors qualifying the law of gravity justify completely ignoring it. The theory of flight modifies the basic gravitational principle that objects immediately fall back to earth; objects with certain aerodynamic properties clearly do not. But the law of gravity is still in force since, in the absence of such aerodynamic properties, objects will behave in accord with it. So too, Gurr argues, with the frustration-aggression mechanism. The innate disposition to strike out at sources of frustration is subject to modification by men's beliefs, inhibitions, and social environment. This does not mean it does not exist. When such factors are not operating, the disposition to aggression will reassert itself.²¹

It should be pointed out that not all the factors that modify aggression act to inhibit it; some, such as a social climate that glorifies retribution, can facilitate

²⁰Ibid., p. 36.

²¹Ibid.

aggression. And factors like aggressive cues, whose absence is cited to predict a lack of aggression, can, conversely, foster it when present. "Modification" cuts both ways. What is called for then, is the kind of multivariate model Gurr ultimately formulates; one which includes variables thought to check aggression and others thought to facilitate it.

Relative Deprivation

Rather than making a direct application of the frustration-aggression framework to political violence, Gurr chooses instead to work with the concept of relative deprivation. He defines relative deprivation as "a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities." "Value expectations," are "the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled"; "value capabilities" are "the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining."²² The basis for the shift in concepts is partly semantical appropriateness. Apparently Gurr feels the frustration-aggression concepts are too tied to settings involving individuals only; an alternate

²²Ibid., p. 23.

terminology is necessary to relate the basic frustration-aggression dynamic to situations involving groups. He points out that the frustration-aggression principles

operate in a wide range of individual behavior, including the actions of those in rebellion against their political community. We need concepts and hypotheses better suited to analyzing the social and psychological transactions that provide the impetus to political violence among members of a collectivity."²³

The concepts of "value capabilities" and "value expectations" seem to meet the above need for Gurr, although he never provides a wholly satisfying explanation for why this is so. Possibly it is because "values" and general levels of value attainments can be used more readily in reference to groups, than the notion of a single specific goal pursued by an individual. The latter is the typical focus in psychological studies of frustration. A second substantive reason for preferring the concept of relative deprivation is the need Gurr feels to emphasize the critical matter of perception. He provides that emphasis by making the distinction between a frustrating situation and subjective awareness of frustration, and incorporating that distinction into the definition of relative

²³ Ibid., p. 36.

deprivation:

A frustrating situation can be defined as one in which the actor is, judged by objective standards, thwarted by some social or physical barrier in attempts to continue enjoyment of a value. The actor can be said to be frustrated, however, only when he is aware of the interference. The awareness of interference is equivalent to the concept of relative deprivation as defined above.²⁴

These stipulations should not, however, obscure the intimate relationship between relative deprivation and the frustration-aggression dynamic. Once the perception of a discrepancy between value expectations and capabilities takes place, it is the basic frustration-aggression mechanism which is engaged to provide the "basic motivational link between RD [relative deprivation] and the potential for collective violence."²⁵

Patterns of Relative Deprivation

Gurr isolates two sets of conditions which give rise to relative deprivation. First, "societal conditions that increase the average level or intensity of expectations without increasing capabilities increase the

²⁴Ted Robert Gurr with Charles Ruttenger, The Conditions of Civil Violence: First Tests of a Causal Model (Princeton, N.J.: Center for International Studies, 1967), p. 4.

²⁵Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 36.

intensity of discontent."²⁶ This type of situation brings on what Gurr terms "aspirational deprivation," and is illustrated in Figure 2. "The value gains of other groups and the promise of new opportunities" are two general conditions that give rise to aspirational deprivation, according to Gurr.²⁷ One would expect to find it in fairly traditional societies suddenly exposed to new ways of life through modern communications media, or, in some cases through exposure to foreign cultures encountered in the course of wartime service in the army of a colonial ruler.²⁸

A second pattern of relative deprivation stems from a decrease in value capabilities without a corresponding decrease in expectations:

Societal conditions that decrease men's average value position without decreasing their value expectations similarly increase deprivation, and hence the intensity of discontent.²⁹

This is called "decremental deprivation" and is depicted

²⁶Ibid., p. 13.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., p. 51.

²⁹Ibid., p. 13.

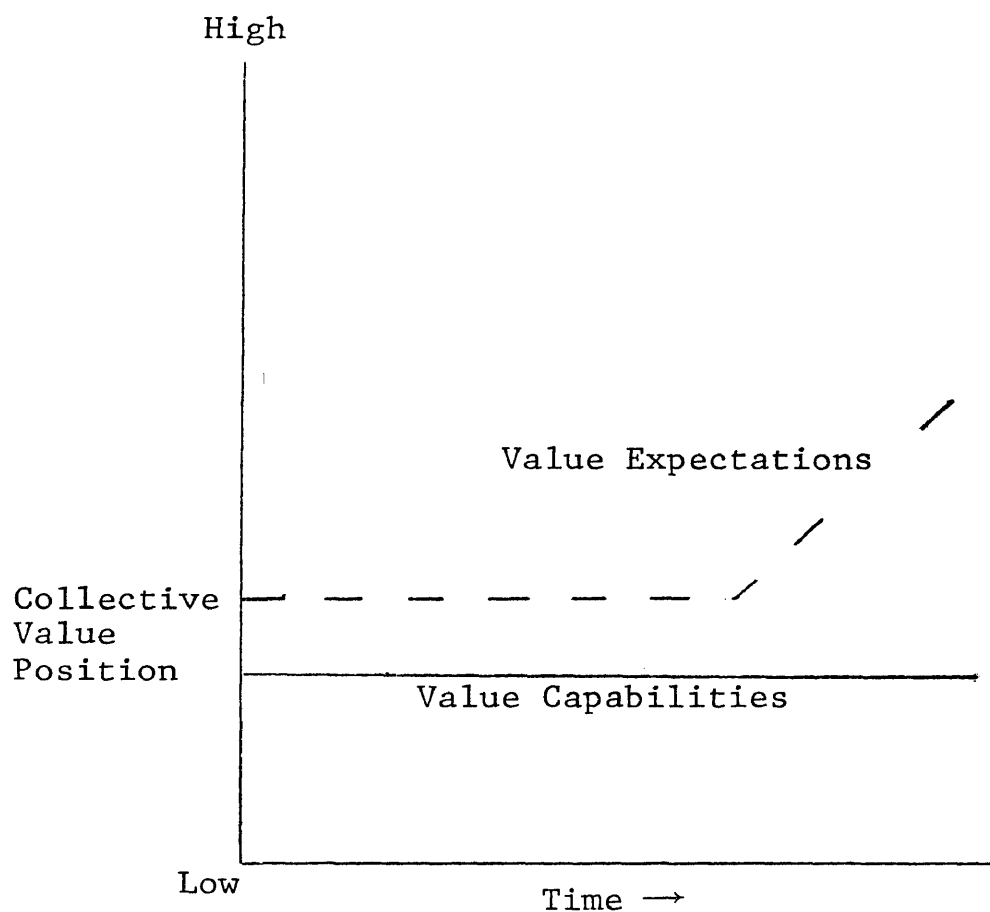


Fig. 2.--Aspirational Deprivation³⁰

³⁰Ibid., p. 51. See also Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing in the Middle East (New York: The Free Press, 1958) for a good discussion on the genesis of aspirations in the modern era.

in Figure 3. In general terms, it can result from, "the inflexibility of value stocks in a society, short-term deteriorations in a groups' conditions of life, and limitations on its structural opportunities."³¹ Examples of decremental deprivation would be the loss of influence by elite groups or the decline in the status of middle class groups relative to working classes. In its most severe form it would be found in traditional societies in the wake of natural catastrophes--floods, earthquakes, and the like. Such societies typically lack the capacity to bounce back possessed by modern industrial countries.

The third type of deprivation, "progressive deprivation," is identical to the Davies J-Curve model presented earlier. As shown in Figure 4, it contains elements of the aspirational and decremental patterns in that value expectations go up and capabilities drop off relative to expectations. However, in this case capabilities initially keep pace with rising expectations before the decline sets in. One would expect transitional societies with transitional groups in them to be especially prone to progressive deprivation. Politics of this type have

³¹Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 47.

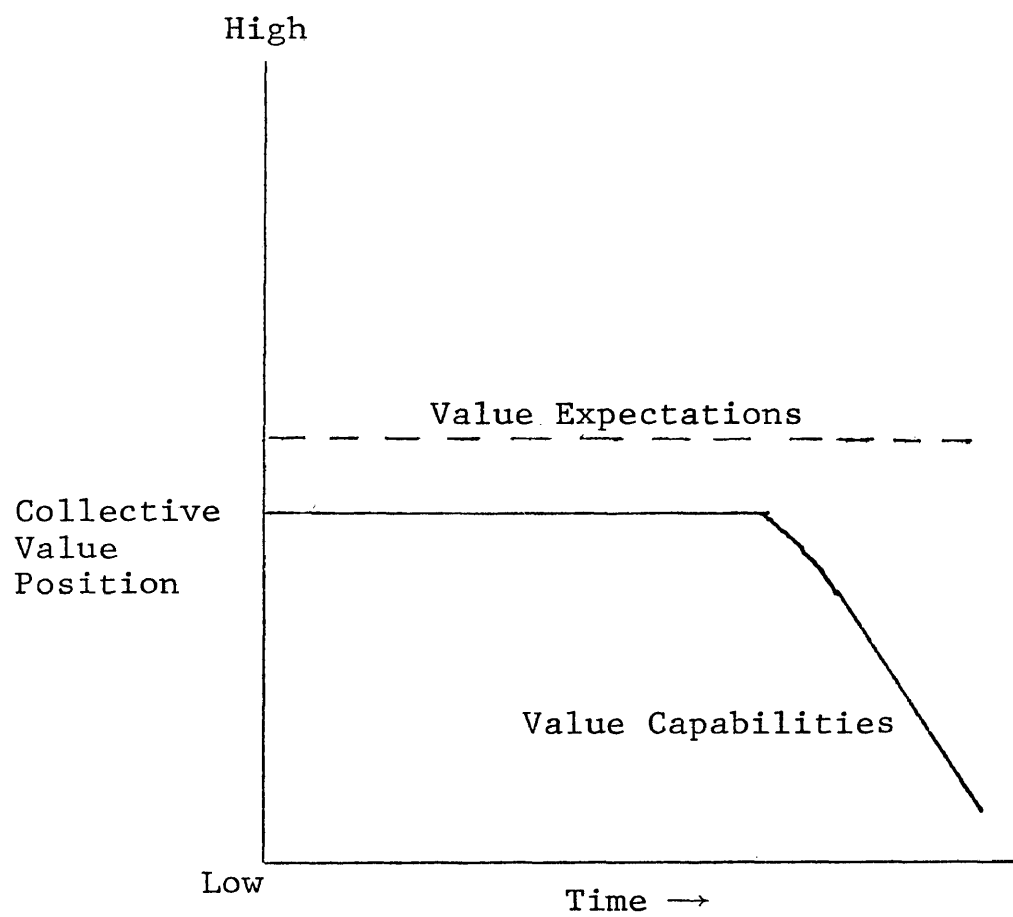


Fig. 3.--Decremental Deprivation³²

³²Ibid.

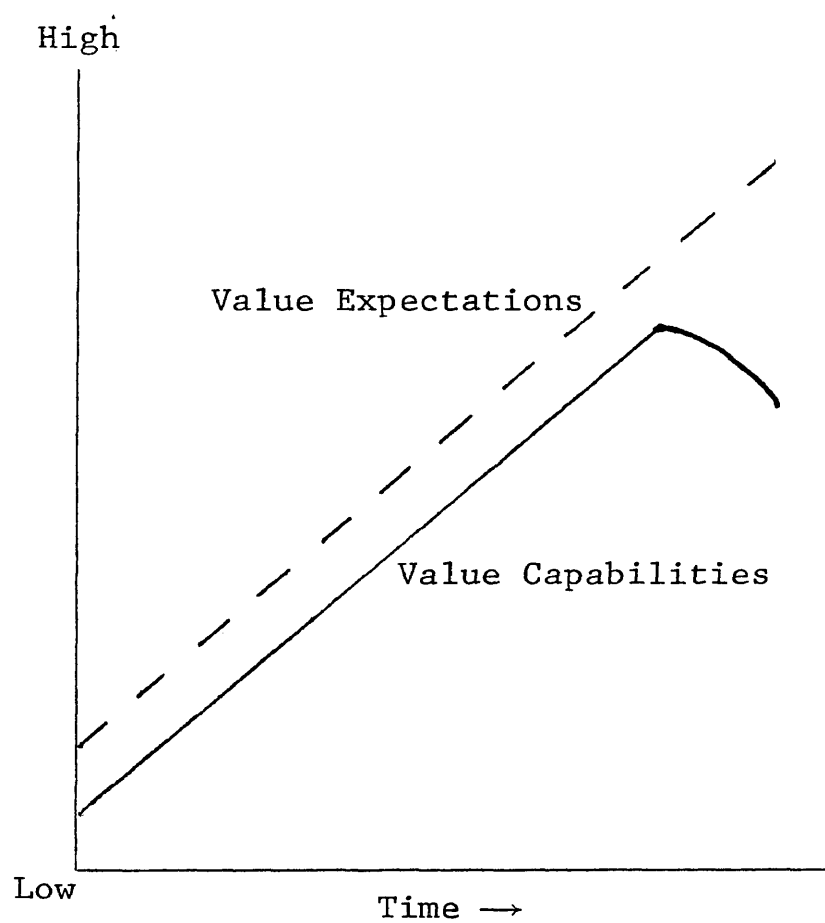


Fig. 4.--Progressive Deprivation³³

³³Ibid., p. 53.

achieved some type of 'take-off' but have not yet developed a set of sufficiently stable institutions to insure sustained growth.

Each of these three models is in contrast to the absolute deprivation or misery model put forth by Marx and Engels in their earlier writings. The misery model would be Gurr's decremental deprivation model minus the expectations (see Figure 5). The misery model goes against the basic premise common to all three of Gurr's relative deprivation models: discontent is relative to expectations; or, borrowing from Hoffer, is born of the capacity of men to dream dreams. In line with this Gurr posits that, other factors to be discussed later being equal, the greater the discrepancy between value expectations and capabilities, the greater the potential for political violence.³⁴

³⁴Ibid., Passim, chaps. 2-3.

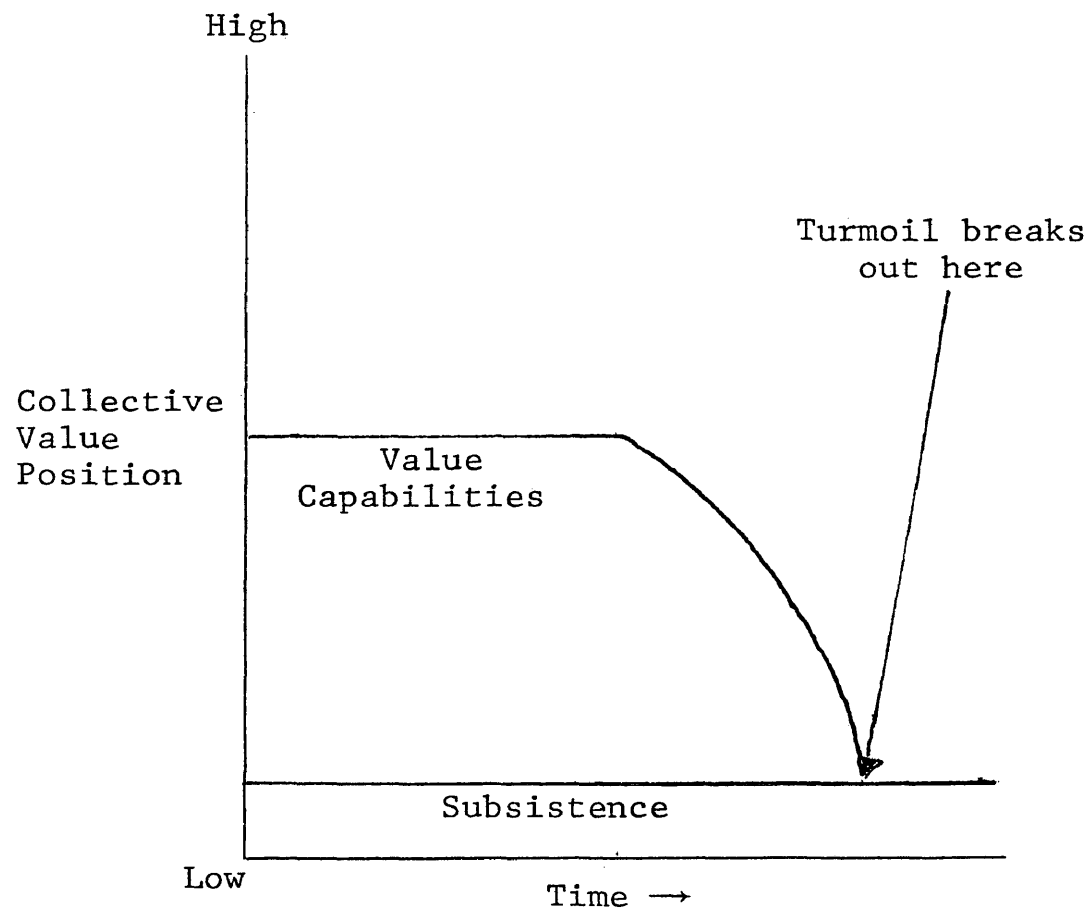


Fig. 5.--Misery Model

Empirical Support

Gurr has made two major tests of his relative deprivation model--one in 1966,³⁵ the other in 1968.³⁶ Results of the latter test were published in the American Political Science Review in December of 1968. The results of both tests were cited in support of propositions discussed at much greater length in Why Men Rebel, Gurr's most comprehensive statement of his theory published in 1970. However, since the model in the 1968 study is presented by Gurr as an improvement over the model in the earlier study, the analysis to follow will be addressed to the 1968 findings.

In accord with Gurr's acknowledgement that other variables interact with a deprivation-induced impulse to aggression, his 1968 study contained a multivariate regression model with five other independent variables beside deprivation. The other independent variables were labeled institutionalization, legitimacy, coercive

³⁵Gurr with Ruttenberg, Conditions of Civil Violence.

³⁶Ted Robert Gurr, "A Causal Model of Civil Strife: A Comparative Analysis Using New Indices," American Political Science Review, LXII (December, 1968), pp. 1104-1124.

potential, facilitation, and past strife; the dependent variable was civil strife. The model, along with the results of the regression analysis is presented in Figure

6. The figures at the top of each cell are the

simple r^2 between the variable and civil strife, i.e., the proportion of variation in the measure of strife accounted for by each independent variable separately. The percentages are the proportion of explained variance accounted for by each variable when the effects of all others are controlled.³⁷

For present purposes an extended explanation of the arrows is not necessary except to say that the arrows indicate the direction of causal relationships either between the independent variables and civil strife, or among the independent variables; pluses and minuses indicate whether the relationships are positive or negative.

Coercive potential is based on the simple size of coercive forces at the disposal of the government, supplemented by measures of the loyalty of such forces. The underlying causal proposition behind the coercive potential variable is as follows: The relationship between the simple size of coercive forces at the disposal of the regime and the level of strife perpetrated by aggrieved

³⁷Ibid., p. 1121.

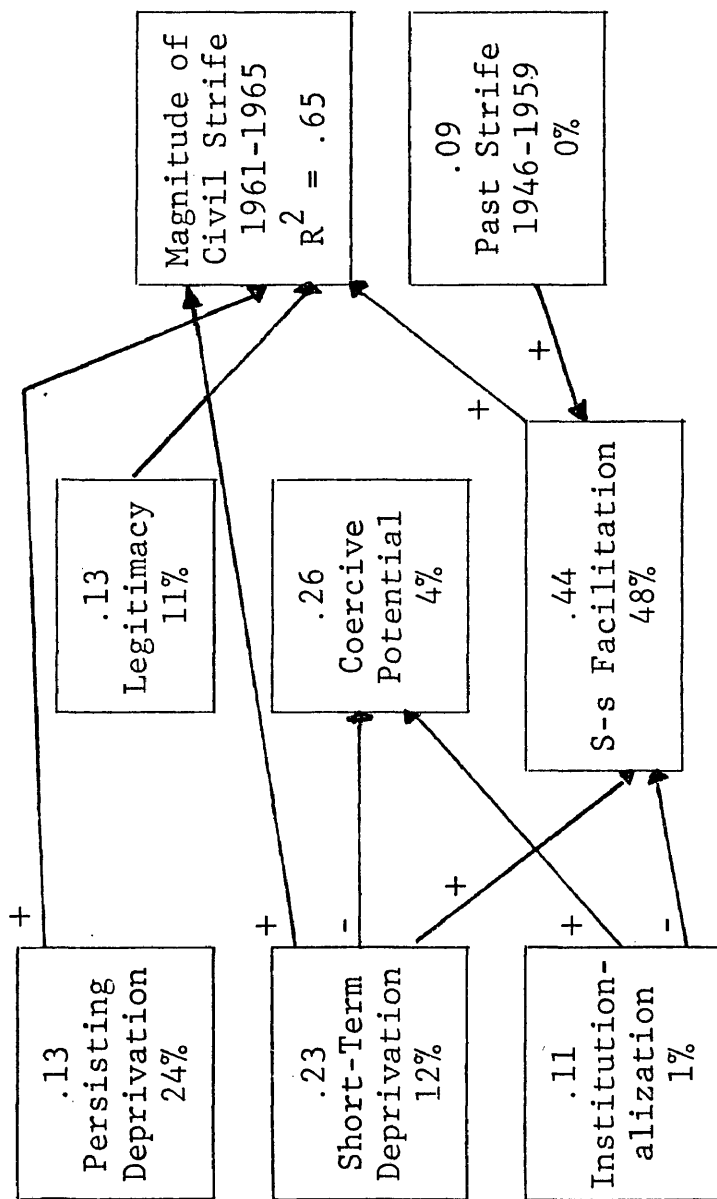


Fig. 6.--Determinants of Civil Strife³⁸

³⁸ Ibid.

citizens striking out at the regime is held to be curvilinear. This is depicted in Figure 7.

The curvilinear nature of the relationship derives from changes in the relative impact of anger and fear as coercive force size increases. Initially, at low to moderate levels of coercion, anger is proposed as the dominant emotion. Coercion at these states does nothing to relieve anger spawned by deprivations. What it does do is add to it. People are more angry at having their expression of grievances interfered with, than they are fearful of the consequences of such expression, and this is reflected in a steady climb in civil strife levels up to the mid-ranges of coercive force size. Past that point, the pattern is reversed, as fear begins to override anger with each increment in coercion. Gurr accepts the validity of this relationship, but argues that when the loyalty of the regime's armed forces is taken into account, the curvilinear pattern will be replaced by a negative linear relationship. The results of Gurr's empirical analysis support both hypotheses.³⁹

³⁹Ibid., p. 1118.

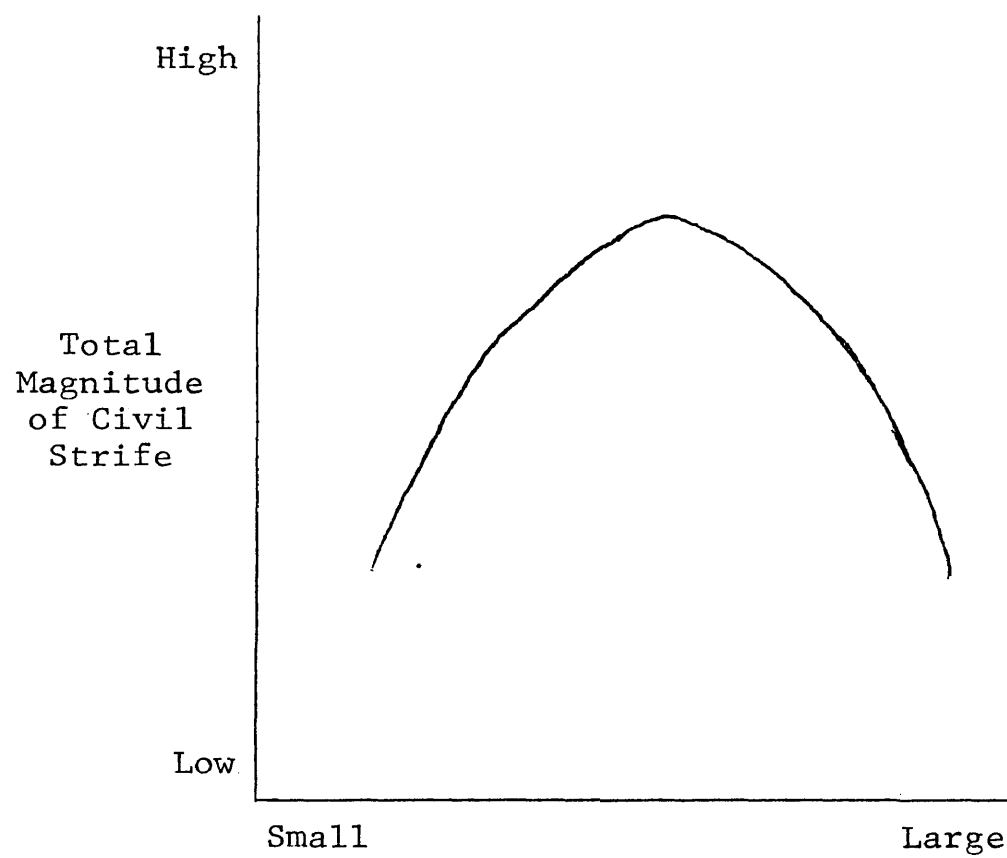


Fig. 7.--Coercive Force Size⁴⁰

⁴⁰Ibid.

Institutionalization refers to, "the extent to which societal structures beyond the primary level are broad in scope, command substantial resources and/or personnel, and are stable and persisting."⁴¹ It is manifested through the existence of groups such as labor unions and political parties which can operate to "minimize violent economically-based conflict."⁴² This conflict reducing effect is based on two psychological processes:

One is that the existence of such structures increases men's value opportunities, i.e., their repertory of alternative ways to attain value satisfaction. A complementary function is that of displacement: labor unions, political parties, and a range of other associations may provide the discontented with routinized and typically non-violent means for expressing their discontents.⁴³

Facilitation represents social and environmental conditions that may "facilitate the outbreak and existence of strife."⁴⁴ Gurr operationalizes facilitation by measurements of "past levels of civil strife," and "social and structural facilitation per se." The theoretical basis

⁴¹Ibid., p. 1105.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 1106.

for the former is that "populations in which strife is chronic tend to develop, by an interaction process, a set of beliefs justifying violent responses to deprivation."⁴⁵ Social and structural facilitation correspond to organizational and physical environmental conditions which make it easier for aggrieved parties to mount and sustain armed attacks on the government. Gurr uses the relative strength of the Communist Party to measure the organizational component of facilitation, the idea being that illegal parties such as the Communist Party "are more facilitative of strife because their membership is likely, because of the exigencies of repression, to be more dedicated, better organized, and committed to the more violent forms of conflict."⁴⁶ Politics in which such parties are able to exist, therefore, should be characterized by a higher level of violence. The structural component of facilitation relates to the terrain and transportation networks of a country. Countries with rugged terrain and poorly developed transportation systems provide rebels

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 1114.

with inaccessible strongholds from which they can sustain an insurrection.⁴⁷

The final variable in the model, legitimacy, is included on the assumption that people are more willing to comply with the directives of a government, notwithstanding the existence of deprivations, if the government is possessed of a certain moral rectitude. To the extent that a government is seen in this light the level of strife should be lower for any given level of frustration. Gurr operationalizes legitimacy by measuring the extent to which governmental institutions are "native" to the society (i.e., not imposed by some foreign power as in the case of a colonial regime), and the length of time over which such institutions have survived intact without substantial reform.⁴⁸

The dependent variable, civil strife, is defined as "all collective, nongovernmental attacks on persons or property that occur within the boundaries of an autonomous or colonial political unit."⁴⁹ By "nongovernmental"

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 1115.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 1107. This definition is similar to, but not identical to the definition of "political

Gurr means "acts by subjects and citizens who are not employees or agents of the regime, as well as acts of such employees or agents contrary to role norms, such as mutinies and coups d'état."⁵⁰

Finally there is the deprivation variable. It has been considered last because it will be singled out for close scrutiny. As Figure 6 indicates, Gurr divides it into short-term deprivation and persisting deprivation. Persisting deprivation represents deprivation over the long, but not very long run. As Gurr introduces the variable,

violence" given earlier. It differs in that, on the basis of the definition alone, it is not quite clear if Gurr is talking about violence aimed at the political regime, or some diffuse form of violence that happens to occur within the political borders of the regime. However, the remainder of Gurr's study makes it clear that he is referring to violence targeted to against the regime. His inclusion of legitimacy, for example, in the class of variables determining civil strife indicates this. The causal proposition associated with legitimacy is that, other things being equal, people will decide to engage or not engage in violence according to the moral rectitude of the regime. This implies that the regime is already marked off as the appropriate focal point of violence because it is held responsible for deprivations. The only question is whether people will be willing to endure deprivations and forgo attacks on the regime in light of its moral qualities.

⁵⁰Ibid.

In the very long run men's expectations about the goods and conditions of life to which they are entitled tend to adjust to what they are capable of attaining. In the shorter span, however, some groups may persistently demand and expect values, such as greater economic opportunity, political autonomy, or freedom of religious expression that their societies cannot provide.⁵¹

Since the indices used to measure persisting deprivation as well as short-term deprivation will play a very large part in our assessment of Gurr's model, they will be reproduced here almost in full. Gurr measured persisting deprivation in terms of the following factors:

- (1) Economic discrimination is defined as systematic exclusion of social groups from higher economic value positions on ascriptive bases. For each polity the proportion of population so discriminated against, if any, was specified to the nearest .05, and the intensity of deprivation coded on a four point scale . . .
- (2) Political discrimination is similarly defined in terms of systematic limitation in form, norm, or practice of social groups' opportunities to participate in political activities or to attain elite positions on the basis of ascribed characteristics. Proportionality and intensity scores were determined and combined in the same manner as economic discrimination scores.
- (3) Potential separatism was indexed by multiplying the proportional size of historically-separatist regional or ethnic groups by a four-point intensity measure.
- (4) Dependence on private foreign capital, indexed by negative net factor payments abroad as a percentage

⁵¹Ibid., p. 1109.

of Gross Domestic Product in the late 1950's, is assumed to be a chronic source of dissatisfaction in an era characterized by economic nationalism. The greater the proportion of national product that accrues to foreign suppliers of goods or capital, the greater the inferred intensity of deprivation . . .

(5) Religious cleavages are a chronic source of deprivation-inducing conflict. The scale for intensity of religious cleavage takes account both of number of organized religious groups with two percent or more of total population . . . and of the duration of their coexistence, the greater that duration the less the inferred intensity

(6) Lack of educational opportunity was indexed, in proportionality terms only, by subtracting primary plus secondary school enrollment ratios ca. 1960 from 100. Education is so widely regarded as an essential first step in individual socio-economic advancement that one can infer deprivation among the uneducated, and among the parents of children who cannot attend school if not yet among the children themselves.⁵²

Justification for inclusion of the short-term deprivation was made in the following terms:

Any sharp increase in peoples' expectations that is unaccompanied by the perception of an increase in value capabilities, or any abrupt limitation on what they have or can hope to obtain, constitute relative deprivation. We inferred that short-term, relative declines in system economic and political performance were likely to be perceived as increased deprivation for substantial numbers of people.⁵³

Short-term deprivation was measured in terms of the following indices:

⁵²Ibid., pp. 1109-1110.

⁵³Ibid., p. 1110.

(1) Short-term trends in trade value, 1957 compared with 1950-57: The percentage change of trade value, exports + imports, for 1957-60 was compared with the rate for 1950-57, and any relative decrease in the later period was treated as an indicator of short-term deprivation .

(2) Short-term trends in trade value, 1960-63 compared with 1950-60: Procedures identical with (1), above, were used . . .

(3) Inflation 1960-63 compared with 1958-61: Data on cost-of-living indices were scaled and combined in such a way that the highest deprivation scores were assigned to polities with substantial and worsening inflation in the 1958-63 period .

(4) 1960-63 GNP growth rates compared with 1950's growth rate: Economic growth rate data were scaled so that polities having low rates in the 1950's and even lower rates in the early 1960's received the highest deprivation scores; those with moderate rates in the 1950's but substantial relative decline in the early 1960's received somewhat lower deprivation scores; and those with a steady high, or moderate but steadily increasing, rates received zero deprivation scores.

(5) Adverse economic conditions 1960-63: To supplement aggregate data indicators of economic deprivation, several summary news sources were searched for evaluative statements about adverse internal economic conditions such as crop failures, unemployment, export market slumps, drought, etc. . . .

(6) New restrictions on political participation and representation by the regime were coded from the same sources (as above) for the same years.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 1111.

Problems: Relative Deprivation?

Using regression analysis Gurr constructed a causal model made up of the variables presented above. The model was aimed at explaining strife levels in 114 countries during the 1961-65 period. On the basis of the results of his analysis, presented in Figure 6, Gurr concluded that "the fundamental proposition that strife varies directly in magnitude with the intensity of relative deprivation is strongly supported . . ." The deprivation variables, "provide an R of .60 ($R^2 = .36$).". Hence, "the basic proposition of this study, that relative deprivation is a necessary precondition for strife,"⁵⁵ remains intact. The question is, does it really? Do Gurr's results, impressive at first glance, clearly sustain his conclusion that relative deprivation is a necessary condition for strife?

Anticipating criticism, Gurr himself outlined the basis on which his conclusions might be challenged:

(T)here is only one scientifically acceptable alternative to regarding the results reported here as strong . . . evidence for the psychological propositions relating relative deprivation . . . to civil violence. That is to provide some reasonably

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 1122-1123.

parsimonious, alternative explanations (substantive or technical) . . .⁵⁶

The question becomes then, does a reasonably parsimonious alternative explanation of Gurr's results exist? I would argue that, owing to the manner in which Gurr used his inferential measures of deprivation, it does; that in light of Gurr's procedures for measuring deprivation, the kind of simple misery model offered by Marx and Engels in early writings is such an alternative. The latter is an alternative in the sense of being distinct from Gurr's thesis because it defines deprivation in terms of sheer material needs, making no reference to expectations. For this very reason the misery model has greater parsimony: with no reference to thwarted expectations recourse to frustration-aggression theory--something Gurr spends a good deal of time on--becomes unnecessary. And, especially important, it can be shown to be an alternative in that it is consistent with the results Gurr cites in defense of the relative deprivation thesis.

As a glance at Gurr's indices of deprivation will show, Gurr did not measure relative deprivation--or at least not directly measure it. Relative deprivation is a

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 1123.

state of mind. To measure it directly Gurr would have needed surveys in which people were questioned about their expectations, and on whether they perceived a discrepancy between their value expectations and value capabilities. Instead Gurr relied on indirect or inferential measures. That is, on the basis of direct measures of objective levels of economic goods, political and religious freedom, etc., Gurr inferred that people would feel a sense of deprivation relative to some unspecified and unmeasured set of expectations. Gurr, of course, did this quite openly, explicitly stating, for example, in the course of defining short-term deprivation, that, "we inferred that short-term, relative declines in system economic and political performance were likely to be perceived as increased deprivation . . .";⁵⁷ or, in the case of one of his persisting deprivation indices, saying that, the greater the reliance on foreign capital, "the greater the inferred intensity of deprivation"⁵⁸ (emphasis added). Also he does it with full awareness, noting that, "the results are not a 'direct' test of the relevance of such

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 1110.

⁵⁸Ibid.

variables, since the indices of psychological variables are derived from aggregate data rather than being obtained . . . from cross-national surveys."⁵⁹ And in itself, his use of inferential measures cannot be condemned. Inferential measures are quite common in social science research, and they are quite legitimate according to the canons of scientific methodology as laid out in standard texts on the subject.⁶⁰ However, the manner in which Gurr used inferential measures in this particular case made his results inconclusive.

Rather than designing indicators to reflect the three patterns of relative deprivation presented earlier--the aspirational, progressive, and decremental patterns, Gurr chose instead to use indices apparently intended to capture no pattern in particular. There is no mention anywhere of these three patterns. If the indices reflect a particular pattern it would have to be the decremental pattern. The persisting deprivation indicators seem to measure long-term declines; the short-term, short-term

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 1123.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1970), pp. 97-106.

declines. This is unfortunate because the decremental pattern comes closest to the very model we have identified as an alternative to the relative deprivation model--the misery model. As a consequence, legitimate questions arise that weaken Gurr's conclusion. What did Gurr measure? Did he measure relative deprivation, or can his measures be regarded with equal validity as measures of absolute deprivation--i.e., misery? Without survey data, I would argue that they can. Ultimately then, we have two distinct explanations, each consistent with Gurr's results, and those results, therefore, are theoretically inconclusive.

This problem need not have arisen because it does not stem directly from the use of inferential measures. If Gurr had stuck to inferential measures but employed them in such a way as to reflect particular patterns of development of deprivation, he might have avoided the inconclusiveness that plagues his results. Even without direct attitude surveys to corroborate states of mind, the progressive and aspirational patterns possess properties that distinguish them from the misery model. The progressive pattern consists in part of a steady rise in value capabilities. Certainly in the case of objectively

measureable variables such as cost of living, income, educational attainments, etc., this can be measured with aggregate data. The unchanged, horizontal level of capabilities associated with the aspirational pattern can be similarly measured. In each case they can easily be distinguished from the misery pattern of progressive decline solely on the basis of aggregate indices of empirical phenomena.

Gurr may have failed to distinguish between patterns because, as of the 1968 study, he had not yet developed the scheme of three distinguishable ways in which relative deprivation could develop. The latter was presented in Why Men Rebel, written in 1970. Or, even if these schemes had taken shape by 1968, he may not have wanted to use it because it would have entailed subdividing his 114 nation sample into three separate categories. Much more research on each country would have been necessary to do this. Also, in the event one or two of the categories contained only a few countries, reduced sample sizes might have made it difficult to establish statistical significance. But, whatever his reasons, working only with indices of some type of general deprivation--which in fact ended up looking like decremental deprivation,

made Gurr's results inconclusive. Consequently, the relative deprivation thesis has yet to receive strong and clear empirical support.

Summary and Conclusions

The foregoing remarks have been made not so much to criticize Gurr, as to establish the framework for the present study. The question posed at the outset of this chapter unfortunately still remains an open one: Does political violence spring from the abject misery of physical environments as men, pushed to the precipice of subsistence, lash out at authorities; or, is it born in the gaps men see between expectations and attainments; less an affair of external, material need than internal, psychological wants? Gurr fell far short of providing a clear and convincing answer. The means he used to measure deprivation made it difficult to distinguish between relative wants and sheer desperation.

What is needed, therefore, are studies in which the specific pattern of relative deprivation is established for each individual case. At least in cases in which objectively measureable material conditions either remained static or improved, tests of statistical models

built around these patterns should furnish a good basis for deciding between the relative deprivation and misery theses--even without direct psychological measures.

The present study is designed to meet this need. The United States has been selected as a setting for testing a single relative deprivation model. During the years from 1964 to 1968 a wave of rioting broke out in black urban ghettos in cities throughout the United States. What I propose to do is investigate conditions prior to the rioting to establish which of the three relative deprivation patterns best characterizes the growth of black discontent. A regression model appropriate for this pattern will then be constructed and tested. The hope is that by proceeding on a case-by-case basis further light can be shed on the genesis of political violence.

CHAPTER II

GHETTO TURMOIL IN THE UNITED STATES

Throughout the night of July 22, 1967 reports of sniper fire had been pouring into the Detroit police headquarters. A short distance from headquarters Mrs. Helen Hall was staying at the Harlan House Hotel. Her curiosity having been aroused by noises outside, she peered through a hall window on the fourth floor. "Look at the tanks," she called out to the other guests. Seconds later, she died as .50 caliber bullets from those tanks began slamming into the building.¹ Around midnight Sharon George, a 23 year old white woman, was a passenger in a car along with her husband and two brothers. They dropped off two Negro friends and then started returning home. Their automobile was soon slowed by a crowd milling in the street. A shot fired at close range struck

¹The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), p. 102.

the car. Sharon Goerge died within two hours.² In Newark, at about eight o'clock on the night of July 12, 1967, Mrs. L. M., her husband, their five sons, and Mr. M's brother were returning home from dinner in a restaurant. Mr. M., who was driving, panicked as he approached a National Guard roadblock. He slowed the car, then swerved around. A shot rang out. When they reached home the family began piling out of the car. Ten year Eddie failed to move. He had died from a bullet wound in the head.³

These incidents are but three pieces of a recurring nightmare that haunted America during the 1960's. From 1964 to 1968, on some 300 to 400 different occasions, violence by blacks in cities across the country shattered what remained of the myth of black contentment. The first question is, what happened?

Roman Holiday or Revolution?

Some said not much happened; not really. The riots did not have to be taken too seriously because they did not amount to a serious social protest, an attempt to

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 94.

challenge the legitimacy of existing institutions. This was the thesis advanced by the McCone Commission, a group of civic and business leaders appointed by Governor Brown of California to investigate the Watts riots in 1964.⁴

David Sears and John McConahay summarize the findings of that commission as follows:

After (1) labeling the riot an 'insensate rage of destruction,' the commission proposed that (2) participants were a small fraction of the ghetto (2 percent or 10,000 persons) who were marginally related to the ghetto community, as drifters (principally criminals), unemployed, and dropouts from the educational system, and that (3) participants were newcomers to Los Angeles from the South who had been attracted by California's liberal welfare policies and who turned to violence when the expectations they brought with them were not fulfilled.⁵

If this is true, if the participants were no more than "a senseless mob, riffraff," or freeloading southern newcomers, then the riots were devoid of any political significance. They could be relegated to the status of

⁴Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots (McCone Commission), Violence in the city--an end or a beginning? (Los Angeles: 1965).

⁵David O. Sears and John B. McConahay, The Politics of Violence: The New Urban Blacks and the Watts Riot (Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), p. 19. See also Governor's Commission, Violence in the city, pp. 1, 4-6, 24, and 71.



the "irrational and pathological";⁶ a "Roman Holiday" of violence that provided some sort of emotional release.⁷ And the problems they represented, "were not the collective problems of a large black community living in a predominantly white society riddled with racism; they were merely the individual peculiarities of a few deviant and uncivilized troublemakers."⁸

This point is important as it is central to the purposes of the study. If we are dealing with the pathological disorders of a small number of deviant individuals, then it is pointless to use the riots to test a theory purporting to explain civil unrest in terms of general social conditions. In this case the riots are best left to the clinical psychologists or criminologists. On the other hand, if the riots were perpetrated by a fair number of average citizens whose conduct grew out of

⁶Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence, p. 19.

⁷Louis H. Masotti and Don R. Bowen, "Civil Violence: A Theoretical Overview," in Riots and Rebellion, ed. by Louis H. Masotti and Don R. Bowen (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, Inc., 1968), p. 16.

⁸Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence, p. 19.

grievances related to the social circumstances in which they lived, then a study of these circumstances makes sense.

It might be pointed out that Gurr considers riots in general as manifestations of political unrest. They are placed into one of three broad categories of political violence, "turmoil," "conspiracy," and "internal war."

"Turmoil," is defined as "relatively spontaneous, unorganized political violence with substantial popular participation, including violent political strikes, riots, political clashes, and localized rebellions."⁹ And it is clear throughout his book that he regards the ghetto riots in the United States in particular as appropriate objects for explanation by his theory of political violence.¹⁰

⁹Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 11. Gurr defines "conspiracy" as "highly organized political violence with limited participation, including organized political assassinations, small-scale terrorism, small-scale guerilla wars, coups d'état, and mutinies." "Internal war" is defined as "highly organized political violence with widespread popular participation, designed to overthrow the regime or dissolve the state and accompanied by extensive violence, including large-scale terrorism and guerilla wars, civil wars, and revolutions."

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 99, 167, 169, 172-173, 183-184, 197, 226-227, and 290.

However, Gurr makes no systematic attempt to justify his treatment; that is, to take up the specific question of whether U.S. ghetto riots are political violence and demonstrate that they meet his own criteria of being (1) collective violence (i.e., violence by relatively large numbers of people, and (2) a political form of collective violence by reason of striking against the political regime in some way. So in light of Gurr's ambiguity on this point, as well as the "riffraff theory" offered by the McCone Commission, the question of whether the riots were the pathological outbursts of a few social misfits or genuine political phenomena should be taken up.

Evidence gathered from various sources may be seen to support the political interpretation. The Kerner Commission found that 11 percent of the riot area residents in Detroit and 45 percent of ghetto inhabitants in Newark were self-reported rioters, which diminishes our confidence in the argument that only a miniscule portion of those communities took part.¹¹ Similarly, a survey conducted by T. M. Tomlinson and David Sears disclosed that 15 percent of the curfew area residents in Los

¹¹Kerner Commission, Report of Disorders, p. 7.

Angeles participated in the Watts riot. Moreover, apart from actual participation, the same authors found that the conduct of the rioters was not inconsistent with the sentiment of a larger segment of the community that did not take part in the riot. They report that 30 percent selected "very or somewhat favorable" to describe their feelings toward the rioters, 19 percent "ambivalent or neutral," and 42 percent "strongly or moderately unfavorable."¹²

Nor does it appear that the rioters were itinerant drifters and trouble-makers from outside the region. A survey by the Kerner Commission found that 74.4 percent of the rioters in Detroit and 74 percent of those in Newark were brought up in the North. Further, data gathered by the commission on five cities which experienced riots revealed that 63 percent of the arrestees were born in the same region in which the riot took place. The commission summed up its views on this question by pointing out that, "Rioters are not only more likely than the non-involved to have been born in the North, but they are

¹²T. M. Tomlinson and David O. Sears, "Riot Ideology in Los Angeles: A Study of Negro Attitudes," in Black Revolt, ed. by James A. Geschwender (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., p. 375.

also more likely to have been long-term residents of the city in which the disturbance took place."¹³

The rioters themselves, then, do not appear to have been negligible in number nor atypical of their communities. To the extent that the McCone Commission thesis hangs on demonstrating that they were, it must be rejected. But can one go so far as to say the riots were a form of political violence? Two analysts of the riots, Louis Masotti and Don Bowen, approach this issue in a fashion similar to Gurr. They argue that determining the nature of the riots comes down to a matter of intended targets. What distinguishes political violence from other types of violence, such as family feuding and criminal activity, "is the intent of those engaged in it to strike out at the animate or inanimate representatives of the civil order. Such intent may be directly expressed by the participants themselves, or inferred from their actions by the observers."¹⁴

Applying Masotti and Bowen's standard of 'expressed or inferred intent' to the riots, we find that

¹³Kerner Commission, Report on Disorders, pp. 130-131.

¹⁴Masotti and Bowen, "Civil Violence," p. 13.

the statements and actions of a sizeable segment of blacks sustain a view of riots as political phenomena. A Kerner Commission survey of blacks in 15 American cities found over half of those interviewed viewed the riots as predominantly protests (see Table 1). Around a fourth saw them as at least partly protest in nature. These results square with the findings of Tomlinson and Sears who interviewed both blacks arrested in the course of the Watts riot in Los Angeles and blacks who were not arrested but who resided in the riot area. (The Kerner Commission sample was not drawn from Los Angeles.) When asked to choose the term best characterizing the riot, 38 percent of the curfew area residents chose "revolt," "revolution," or "insurrection," as did 45 percent of those arrested.¹⁵ One might argue that people tend to read meaning into past actions that had little or no meaning at the time they were performed. However, Tomlinson and Sears found that the respondents were able to single out specific problems they felt were behind the riots: 38 percent of the curfew zone residents and 51 percent of those arrested cited particular grievances, including "discrimination

¹⁵Tomlinson and Sears, "Riot Ideology," p. 384.

TABLE 1
CHARACTER OF THE RIOTS

Responses	Blacks	
	Men	Women
Mainly protest	56%	59%
Mainly looting	9	10
50/50 mixture	30	25
Don't know	5	6
Total	100%	100%

Source: National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), p. 47¹⁶

¹⁶The 15 cities in the Kerner Commission survey were Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Gary, Milwaukee, Newark, New York (Brooklyn only), Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, St. Louis, and Washington, D.C.

and mistreatment by whites" (7 percent of curfew area residents, 4 percent of arrestees); "poverty, economic deprivation, inadequate services" (10 percent and 5 percent); "police mistreatment" (21 percent and 42 percent); and "pent-up hostility, desire for revenge, fed up" (26 percent and 34 percent).¹⁷ As Table 2 indicates, the Kerner Commission's 15-city survey revealed a similar propensity by blacks to focus on specific socio-economic grievances.

Masotti and Bowen point to the actions of the rioters as their basis for saying that the riots were political in character. The rioters, they note, were very selective in their choice of targets. White policemen were singled out for attack, and white-owned stores looted and burned while the property of blacks often went untouched.¹⁸ They cite no hard evidence to back up this statement, but it is consistent with what the Kerner Commission found. While cautioning against oversimplified profiles of the "typical" riot, the commission nevertheless felt safe in drawing certain general conclusions

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Masotti and Bowen, "Civil Violence," p. 13.

TABLE 2
GRIEVANCES BEHIND THE RIOTS

Grievances	Blacks	
	Men	Women
Discrimination, unfair treatment	49% ^a	48%
Unemployment	23	22
Inferior jobs	13	10
Bad housing	23	20
Poor education	10	9
Poverty	10	8
Police brutality	10	4
Black power or other radicals	4	5
Looters and other undesireables	11	11
Communists	0	0
Total	153%	127%

^aPercentages do not sum to 100 since some people mentioned more than one grievance.

Source: National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), p. 48.

about the 1967 disturbances. One of them was that, "The civil disorders of 1967 involved Negroes acting against local symbols of white American society, authority and property in Negro neighborhoods . . ." ¹⁹ In support of this conclusion the commission stated that,

White-owned businesses are widely believed to have been damaged much more frequently than those owned by Negroes. In at least nine of the cities studied, the damage seems to have been, at least in part, the result of deliberate attacks on white-owned businesses characterized in the Negro community as unfair or disrespectful toward Negroes. ²⁰

In answer, then, to the question posed at the outset, what appears to have happened in these years of turmoil was something more than a mindless campaign of wanton destruction launched by a handful of social misfits. If the riots did not add up to a full-scale revolution, they did have a distinctly political character and shared with revolutions the objective of violently striking out at the civil order. They do, in short, qualify as a form of political violence. The next question is, what caused them?

¹⁹The Kerner Commission, Report of Disorders, p. 6.

²⁰Ibid., p. 116.

The remainder of this chapter will center around the question of which of the three forms of relative deprivation presented in Chapter I would have been most likely to have developed among blacks in the years prior to the riots. In the next section we will examine social and economic changes which would seem to have played a role in shaping the attitudes of blacks. Following this, a theory will be offered on how each of these changes interacted to produce a sense of relative deprivation among blacks. Then we will examine a number of surveys on what blacks thought about several issues relating to their struggle for equality and to the riots. The goal there will not be to test the theory just formulated--that task is reserved for the statistical analysis in the final chapter, but to establish some initial plausibility for it, to see if it is worth testing. In the final part of the chapter a number of propositions will be offered on the relationship between relative deprivation and ghetto rioting, as well as on the relationships between the riots and other variables suggested by Gurr's theory to be important in explaining political violence.

The Gathering Storm

Obviously the ultimate answer to the question of what caused the riots is that black hostility was the product of centuries of ill-treatment at the hands of whites. What I am looking for, however, are the developments that more immediately preceded the riots. Since blacks had suffered discrimination since the civil war but had never initiated violence on the scale of the riots in the 1960's, one suspects that something must have changed in the decade or so before the riots. The task is to determine what that something was, and, for purposes of testing Gurr's theory, to do so in terms of a relative deprivation framework.

In the years prior to the riots three developments would seem to have been very important in determining the orientation of blacks toward white society. First, if blacks took themselves as their point of reference, relative to what they had experienced in the past things seemed to be getting better. While one would hesitate to paint a picture of dramatic improvement in every facet of black life, progress was being made in the two key areas of education and income. Sears and McConahay note that, "post-World War II increases in black educational attainments are astounding. In 1940, black men aged 25-29

averaged 6.5 years of education. By 1962, the average was 11.0."²¹ Table 3 charts a parallel growth in black income. These facts would indicate that the black rebellion of the sixties was in some respects an affair of hope; that its roots are to be found in the heights of shattered dreams rather than the depths of despair.

However, while the above advances may have given blacks reason for optimism, a second, less favorable, trend paralleled it. If, on the one hand, the lot of blacks was improving relative to what it had been in the past, on the other hand, relative to whites things were getting worse. Based on compilations of data by the Departments of Labor and Commerce, the Kerner Commission noted, "Negro incomes still remain far below those of whites. Negro median family income was only 58% of white median income of 1966."²² Moreover,

Although it is growing, Negro family income is not keeping pace with white family income growth. In constant 1965 dollars, median nonwhite income in

²¹Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence, p. 37.

²²The Kerner Commission, Report on Disorders, p. 251.

TABLE 3
BLACK INCOME, 1947-1966

Group	Percentage of Black Families		
	1947	1960	1966
\$7,000 and over	7%	17% ^a	28% ^a
\$3,000 to \$6,999	29	40	41
Under \$3,000	65	44	32
Total	100%	101%	101%

^aAlthough no explanation is offered in the commission report as to why the percentages do not sum to 100, it is presumably due to the rounding off of decimal places.

Source: The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), p. 252.

1947 was \$2,174 lower than median white income. By 1966, the gap had grown to \$3,036.²³

This growing white-black gap was not manifest in education. Sears and McConahay observed that, "The racial differential has not been eliminated but it has been reduced. In 1940, whites had, on the average, 4.0 more years of education than blacks; by 1962, the difference was only 1.5 years (12.5 versus 11.0)."²⁴ However, Davies, along with Sears and McConahay, learned that if one focuses on the differences in the capacities of blacks to translate education into income as compared to whites, here again we find blacks losing ground. Davies, after comparing the income of whites and blacks per year of education, concluded that,

(N)onwhites were closest to earning the same amount as the total population in 1952. They rose from 58 percent in 1940 to 86 percent in 1952, but declined to a low of 74% in 1962. They did not return to their relative status of 1940, but they lost substantial ground compared with where they were in 1952.²⁵

²³Ibid.

²⁴Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence, p. 37.

²⁵James C. Davies, "The J Curve of Rising Expectations and Declining Satisfaction as a Cause of Some Great Revolutions and a Contained Rebellion," in Violence in America, ed. by Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr (New York: The New American Library, 1969), pp. 701-702.

Besides overall decline over time, Sears and McConahay learned that blacks' ability to get a financial return on their education diminished relative to whites as one went up the education ladder:

In 1966, the white person with a grade school education had a median income that was \$1,099 above that of the black person with a comparable education. As education increased, the advantage of whites increased, so that the difference between the races was \$3,095 for people with a college degree.²⁶

Thus, blacks could not look to higher education as a means of closing the gap with whites. If blacks measured their progress in terms of position relative to whites, then, there would seem to have been ample cause for despair.

The third development was the civil right movement of the 1960's. In some form or another, of course, agitation for black equality had been going on since the civil war. The most prominent institution of the pre-1960's campaign was the NAACP (National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People). The NAACP's challenge to discrimination took place most notably in the courts, the crowning achievement of that approach coming in 1954 with the Supreme Court's landmark Brown v. Board of

²⁶Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence, p. 51.

Education decision that outlawed segregation in southern public schools. As significant as this and other legal decisions were to be in their long-range effects, they were eclipsed by the far more visible and dramatic drives for equality that made up the social movement we have come to know as the civil rights movement. The latter was a nonviolent but physical assault on white institutions that took the struggle for black dignity out of the hushed chambers of the nation's courts and put it into the arena of America's streets. It began to rear its head in the boycotts of white businesses in Montgomery in 1955 and Tuskegee in 1957, and gathered momentum in the late 1950's and early 1960's with student sit-ins and freedom rides. By the time President Kennedy fell to an assassin's bullet in 1963 a full-blown movement was under way, complete with national organizations such as CORE (Congress For Racial Equality), SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), and the SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) to give it structure, and leaders such as Martin Luther King to give it inspiration. While these organizations and their leaders differed in many ways, their programs shared the common element of a demand--not a request, but a demand for equality with

with whites. And the demand was to be met not at some point in the distant future, but 'NOW!'

I would argue that the gains blacks made in the 1950's, the growing gulf between them and whites, and the civil rights movement were the clouds of a gathering storm that first struck in midsummer of 1964 when riots convulsed the Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant sections of New York City. What remains is to see just exactly how they joined together to produce that storm.

A Relative Deprivation Theory of Black Discontent

The growth of black incomes and education during the 1950's had two effects. First, it was obviously satisfying in itself. Second, since there was still much room for improvement, it generated expectations of still further progress. If matters had continued on this track, contentment, not violence, would have been the eventual outcome. The expectations spawned by recent gains would be met by new improvements as levels of black income and education kept on rising. This would have been the case, that is, if blacks had continued to use themselves as their point of reference. I would suggest that they did

not, however, and this is where the civil rights movement comes in.

The civil rights movement, aided and abetted by the federal government during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, effected a redefinition of the standards by which blacks measured progress in their daily lives. It changed the standard from improvement relative to the black past to equality relative to the white present. Whites became the point of reference. Once this took place the mood of blacks changed from hopeful optimism to bitter frustration and resentment as blacks took stock of the growing gap between them and whites. The America blacks saw, the white America, was marked not only by the absence of widespread poverty, but by conspicuous consumption. It had become, according to John Kenneth Galbraith, the "affluent society"; a nation so rich that the "conventional wisdom" of getting more wealth had to be abandoned for a new philosophy on what to do with the considerable wealth it already had.²⁷

Much of the frustration and violence might have been avoided if the message of equality had spread

²⁷ John Kenneth Galbraith, The Affluent Society (New York: Mentor Books, 1958), pp. 13-17ff.

slowly; or if escape from the ghetto had come quickly. However, on both scores time was on the side of turmoil. The tactics of the civil rights movement all but ruled out a gradual black awakening. Sit-ins and mass marches invite dramatic and immediate confrontation, not quiet, drawn-out accommodation. And the lack of skills among blacks placed an upper limit on how fast they could rise in technocratic America--to say nothing of the problem of white racism that defied swift resolution.

The above developments are graphically represented in Figure 8. The model depicted in Figure 8 is a modified version of Gurr's progressive deprivation model. It shares with Gurr's original model the elements of rising value expectations and value capabilities. The two differ in that in the Gurr model the sharp discrepancy between expectations and capabilities stems from a decline in capabilities. In the modified model presented below, it came about through a change in the nature of those expectations as blacks suddenly took whites as their point of reference. Given the superior status enjoyed by whites this meant a sharp rise in expectations which, in turn, produced a large discrepancy between black value expectations and capabilities. Expectations of progress in

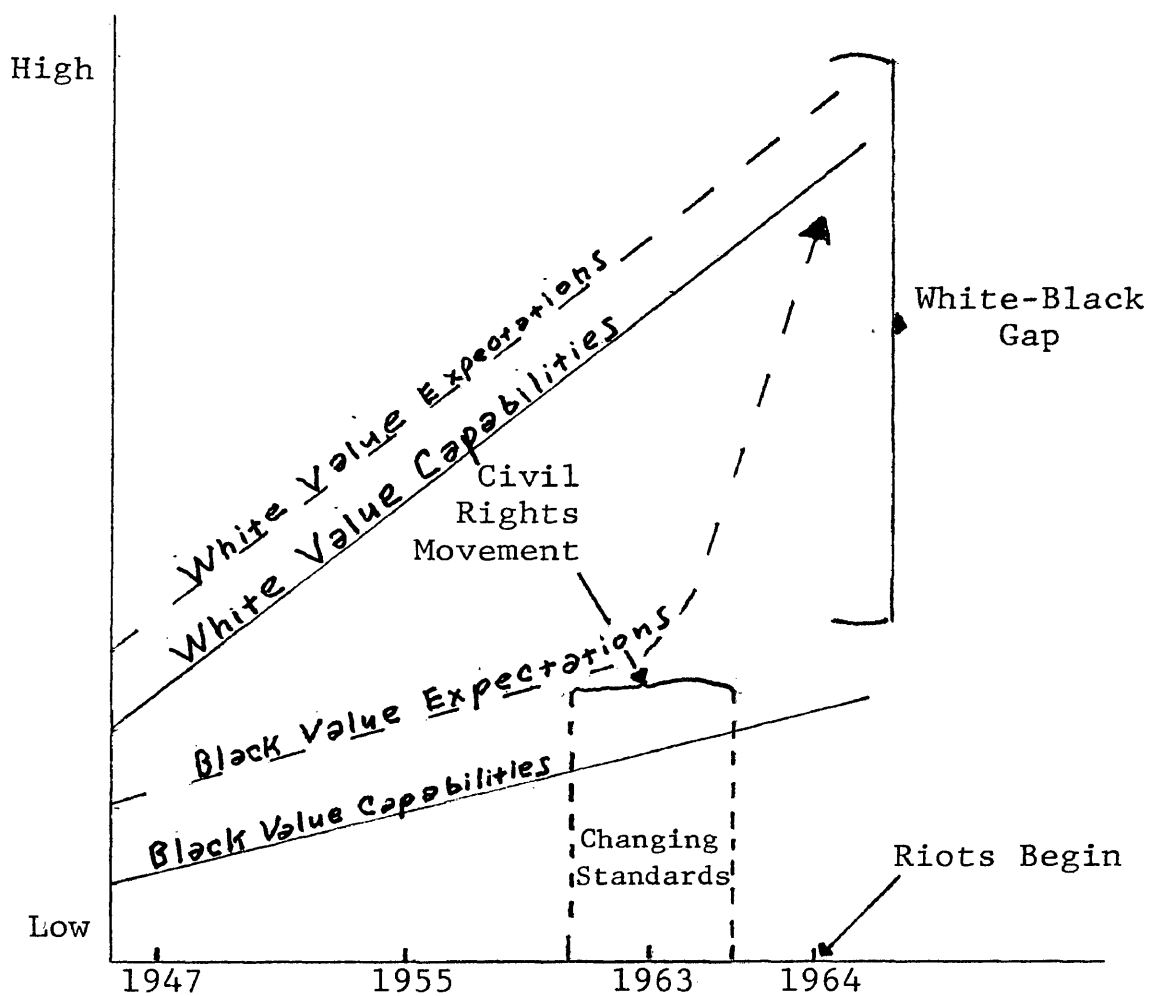


Fig. 8.--Modified Progressive Deprivation

the 1950's were thus frustrated not by a reversal of that progress but by a change in the standards against which it was measured.

It should be noted that no attempt has been made to single out a particular event or set of events as triggering feelings of frustration and anger among blacks. This is in contrast to Davies who argues that such feelings could be traced to attacks on civil rights demonstrators in the South in 1963. According to Davies,

This increase in violence, commencing so to speak with the firehoses and police dogs in May 1963 in Birmingham, affronted not only the physical safety of the demonstrators . . . This increase in violence also affronted the dignity of black people as human beings. Black people sensed that their various and continuously rising expectations, now confronted with violence, were to rise no more.²⁸

Davies may be right, and, beside attacks on demonstrators, one could also point to the death of President Kennedy in November of 1963 as another event that blacks viewed as a setback. Certainly Kennedy's dramatic nationwide television address in which he characterized civil rights as a moral concern for all Americans, marked him as a champion of the black cause. However, focusing on specific events

²⁸Davies, "The J Curve of Rising Expectations," p. 701.

which may or may not have been decisive in some sense, is risky; the risk being one of attributing to narrow events outcomes produced by broad social processes for which events were merely the catalysts. To avoid this problem the argument has been limited to saying that three developments--rising black living standards and expectations in the 1950's, the increasingly large gap between blacks and whites, and rapid assimilation of the ethic of equality--interacted in such a way as to produce a sudden awareness of their inferior position relative to whites--i.e., a sense of relative deprivation. It is this sense of relative deprivation that is being identified as the motive for the riots, leaving to speculation the exact role played by individual events.

It follows that if no particular event is being singled out, the exact time cannot be fixed as to when the perception of a gap between blacks and whites crystallized. It has been set at 1963 because the civil rights movement was getting into full swing in that year, culminating with the March on Washington in August, but that is just a rough guess. It could have been earlier, it could have been a little later.

Supporting Evidence

The above theory on black discontent is just that--a theory. It is built around extrapolations from aggregate data on black incomes and education to conclusions on the states of mind of blacks at points prior to the riots. In general terms this is similar to what Gurr did in his 114 nation study discussed earlier. Given the considerable difficulty of interviewing, recourse to inference from aggregate data is quite understandable, especially in the case of a study such as Gurr's where interviewing means expensive cross-national interviewing. In the present study the same problem exists. Because of the considerable time, effort, and expense involved no attempt has been made to test Gurr's theory by means of opinion surveys. Instead, a theory on black discontent has been proposed that will be tested by statistical analysis of aggregate data. However, because a single country has been selected as the setting for the research--and a wealthy, industrial country at that--the problem is not quite as severe. In connection with the ghetto riots as well as the civil rights problem in general, a number of polls were taken in the United States to tap the sentiment of blacks on matters germane to the theory. They

consist of two nationwide polls done by Louis Harris and Associates in 1963 and 1966, and several smaller polls conducted by the Kerner Commission in cities hard-hit by the riots. Not all the assumptions made in the theory are covered by these polls. Naturally, they provide no information on the assumption that blacks in the 1950's measured progress against their past life styles. Nor is the implied phenomenon of a transition from one standard to another in the 1960's tapped by the polls. And the assumptions that are covered, namely, that blacks by 1963 were thinking in terms of equality with whites and that they were not satisfied with the pace of progress toward this goal, are not supported directly with questions framed in terms identical to them. The polls do, however, provide evidence that can be argued to be consistent with these assumptions.

While no questions were asked on the specific question of whether blacks wanted equality with whites, it is fairly clear from the Harris survey in 1963 that they did not want separatism. Despite the attention in the media gained by the Black Muslims, their message of separation between the races apparently fell on deaf ears for a large number of blacks. Only 6 percent of those

polled said they approved of the Black Muslims, 53 percent said they disapproved, and the remaining 41 percent were "not sure."²⁹ On questions relating to the mixing of whites and blacks under various circumstances, the Harris poll revealed a striking endorsement by blacks of integration over separatism. Seventy-six percent of those polled said they preferred working in a mixed group of whites and blacks versus 11 percent who favored working mostly with blacks.³⁰ A similar picture emerges in housing. Only 20 percent of the respondents favored living in all-black neighborhoods, with 64 percent preferring to have both whites and blacks as neighbors.³¹ When asked, "would you like to see all Negro children in your family go to school with white children or not," 70 percent said they would.³²

²⁹William Brink and Louis Harris, Black and White (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), p. 262. The results of both the 1963 and 1966 polls are reported in Black and White.

³⁰Ibid., p. 232.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., p. 234.

If one can make the assumption that a desire to work, live and have one's children attend school with whites implies a desire to be equal to whites, then these results add up to a very strong endorsement of the goal of equality as of 1963.

To the extent that we can assume blacks equated advancement of negro rights with progress toward equality, then the same Harris survey demonstrated that a sizeable segment of blacks, if not an overwhelming majority, were impatient with the pace of progress toward equality. Fifty-one percent said they thought the cause of Negro rights was moving "too slow"; for 31 percent it was "about right," and 3 percent said it was "too fast."³³

Attitudes on equality have been singled out, of course, because failure to achieve equality is held to have been a major factor in causing the riots. If this is the case, it would follow that those who took part in the riots would be more sensitive to the civil rights movement and discrimination than those who did not. Surveys made by the Kerner Commission bear this out. Table 4 presents the results of a survey done in Newark

³³Ibid., p. 258.

TABLE 4
BLACK RIGHTS DISCUSSION

Frequency	Rioters (106)	Nonrioters (126)
Nearly everyday	53.8%	34.9%
Once a week	12.3	7.9
From time to time	31.1	52.4
Never	0.0	0.0
Don't know	2.8	4.8
Total	100%	100%

Source: National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), p. 178.

comparing rioters and nonrioters on how often they discussed negro rights.

A second survey compared rioters and nonrioters on what they thought were the main obstacles to employment. As Table 5 indicates, rioters showed a greater willingness to perceive discrimination as an obstacle to employment than those who did not participate in the Newark riot.

Obviously these polls fall short of being a good test of the theory of black discontent. Their results have been reported only to show that at least some of the assumptions made on how blacks saw their lot in the 1960's are not pure speculation. The hope is to add some plausibility to the theory by reducing--but certainly not eliminating--reliance on sheer inference for state of mind phenomena. We can say that what hard evidence exists on the states of mind of blacks is at least consistent with what has been proposed in the theory.

Testable Implications

Of the two factors cited as responsible for black discontent, only two--expectations spawned by gains in the 1950's and inequality with whites in the 1960's--will be incorporated into a definition of relative deprivation.

TABLE 5
PERCEIVED OBSTACLES TO EMPLOYMENT

	Rioters (71)	Nonrioters (88)
Lack of Training	18.3%	41.2%
Lack of Experience	12.7	8.8
Discrimination	69.0	50.0 $p < .025$
Total	100%	100%

Source: National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), p. 175.

The third, the impact of the civil rights movement, has been omitted for want of suitable aggregate measures. One that initially suggested itself, frequency of civil rights activity in a city, was dismissed because gathering data on it would have entailed a search of local newspapers for cities all across the country. Only a few such newspapers are on the subscription lists of academic libraries.

Focusing on the other two factors, then, relative deprivation is defined as a combination of growth-induced expectations and inequality with whites. (For brevity, the latter factor will be referred to as "discrimination.") Relative deprivation is expected to be greatest in cities in which the black population experienced the highest level of growth-induced expectations in the 1950's, on the one hand, but, on the other hand, suffered the greatest amount of discrimination in the 1960's. The following proposition is offered on the relationship between relative deprivation and the riots:

Proposition 1: There is a positive, linear relationship between relative deprivation and the magnitude of ghetto riots.

Mediating Variables

As pointed out earlier in the discussion of Gurr's model, violence is not a foregone conclusion in each and every case in which social discontent exists. The effect of other conditions must be taken into account in assessing a person's willingness to resort to violence as a means of redressing grievances. Some of these conditions may have the effect of soothing anger by bringing about a solution to underlying problems. Some, on the other hand, are additional sources of irritation which--though of minor significance under most circumstances--take on great importance in conjunction with pre-existing feelings of hostility. Others will have the effect of inhibiting the violent expression of discontent while leaving root causes of these feelings untouched. Finally, some combine to create a social environment that promotes or lends support to the use of violence. In this section of the study the task is to identify a few of those mediating variables that appear to have had a significant impact on blacks in making their decision to riot. Three broad types of mediating conditions will be considered: social control variables, social facilitation variables, and government capabilities.

Social Control

Social control refers to the overall process whereby a society seeks to limit undesirable behavior. Governments adopt a variety of measures to control such behavior, including coercive force.

Recalling the discussion in chapter two, research on political violence and coercive force used to control such violence has shown the relationship between them to be curvilinear: Low to moderate levels of force serve only to frustrate and anger people further and spur them on to even greater violence, whereas, with large amounts of force, fear begins to override anger to effect a reduction of violence.³⁴

The chief instrument of coercive control involved in the ghetto turmoil is the police, and in this study an attempt will be made to discover the relationship between the size of city police departments and the magnitude of the riots. The following proposition is offered to describe their relationship.

³⁴See p. 33 of this study.

Proposition 2: There is a positive, linear relationship between the size of city police departments and the magnitude of ghetto riots.

The assumed causal process involved in this relationship is that as the size of the police department increases, the likelihood of hostile encounters between the police and ghetto residents increases. The encounters may not be particularly violent or involve a large number of persons. However, they tend to generate feelings of hostility and frustration and further anger persons already discontented over their social conditions. Arrests or reprimands for vagrancy, disturbing the peace, or drunk driving are three examples of this type of incident. It is not thought that police departments were of sufficient size to deter rioters. Hence, a curvilinear pattern has not been proposed.

A number of studies on black grievances support this view of the police as a tension-generating agent. Sears and McConahay found that 42 percent of the black arrestees in Los Angeles cited police mistreatment as one of the causes of the Watts riot.³⁵ A nationwide Gallup

³⁵ Sears and McConahay, The Politics of Violence, p. 167.

poll in 1965 revealed that 35 percent of black males believed there was police brutality in their areas versus 7 percent of white males who had the same opinion.³⁶ In 1964 the New York Times conducted a survey in Harlem which showed that 43 percent of those interviewed thought there was police brutality.³⁷ The Kerner Commission found that this charge lacked a factual basis. It stated in its report that, "when police-citizen contacts are systematically observed, the vast majority are handled without antagonism or incident." Its examination of 5,039 police-citizen contacts turned up only 20--or three-tenths of 1 percent--cases of excessive force by the police.³⁸ Nevertheless, the commission noted, certain police practices understandably generated a large number of irritating incidents to be later lumped by blacks under the broad panoply of "brutality."

These practices, sometimes known as "aggressive preventive patrol," take a number of forms, but invariably they involve a large number of police-citizen contacts initiated by police rather than in response

³⁶ Cited in The Kerner Commission, Report on Disorders, p. 302.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

to a call for help or service. One such practice utilizes a roving task force which moves into high-crime districts without prior notice, and conducts intensive, often indiscriminate, street stops and searches. A number of persons who might legitimately be described as suspicious are stopped. But so also are persons whom the beat patrolman would know are respected members of the community.³⁹

Facilitation

According to Gurr, the factors that facilitate political violence consist of "past strife," and "social and structural facilitation," the latter referring to dissident organizations like the communist party (social facilitation) and physical aspects of a society, such as poorly developed transportation networks and rugged mountainous regions, that provide rebels with secure bases (structural facilitation).⁴⁰

A direct application of Gurr's scheme to ghetto riots is ruled out for three reasons. First neither the organizational nor the physical-environmental components of 'social and structural facilitation' are relevant to the riots. There is no indication whatsoever in any

³⁹Ibid., p. 304.

⁴⁰Ted Robert Gurr, "A Causal Model of Civil Strife: A Comparative Analysis Using New Indices," American Political Science Review, LXII (December 1968), p. 1106.

studies on the riots of their having been planned, executed, or materially supported by organized parties, groups, cliques, factions, cabals, etc. The Kerner Commission's conclusion on the riots of 1967 is typical:

On the basis of all the information collected the Commission concludes that the urban disorders of the summer of 1967 were not caused by, nor were they the consequence of, any organized plan or "conspiracy." Specifically, the Commission has found no evidence that all or any of the disorders or the incidents that led to them were planned or directed by any organization or group, international, national or local.⁴¹

Furthermore, all the ghettos would rank about the same on a scale of physical remoteness. Located in the heart of the city, all were highly accessible to the police. Second, Gurr's taxonomy of facilitating conditions is cumbersome. He makes an awkward distinction between past strife and social and structural facilitation. Past strife is proposed as bearing on political violence by way of fostering "beliefs justifying violent responses to deprivation."⁴² Beliefs justifying violence are a social phenomenon and should be classified as such. Third, while

⁴¹The Kerner Commission, Report on Disorders, p. 202.

⁴²Gurr, "A Causal Model," p. 1106.

the variable of past strife is relevant to the riots as well as to political violence in general, the reason Gurr gives for why it is* relevant--spawning a set of violence-justifying beliefs--is vague. By 'justifying beliefs'. does Gurr mean something on the order of an elaborate ideology such as Marxism? Gurr seems to suggest he does not. He says that these beliefs are an outgrowth of an "interaction process," indicating an informal, ad hoc line of development with a loosely organized, uncodified, and, perhaps, only tacitly expressed set of assumptions on violence as its end product. However, the matter is ultimately unclear.

In this study, past strife in the form of previous riots is proposed as a social factor, which facilitated subsequent riots in two ways. First, previous riots weakened normative constraints against violence. Violence in any society is a serious matter and very strong norms exist against its use. The power of these norms to restrain behavior can be weakened in one of two ways. First, the norms can be weakened if they are challenged in principle as being wrong. In the case of prohibitions against violence this is not likely to happen. Most people will agree that, in principle, violence is to be condemned.

A survey on the attitudes of American men toward violence disclosed that 97 percent of the respondents disapproved of violence in principle.⁴³ The restraining power of social norms can be weakened in a second way: by the mere fact that they are violated. Matters may never develop to the point where norms are challenged in the abstract, but, because a number of persons have transgressed against them, it becomes much easier for others to conceive of doing so themselves. This is precisely the effect that I believe previous riots to have had. Nothing on the order of a competing set of beliefs justifying violence arose to displace old norms against it; rather, the grip of those norms was weakened by the deeds of others. The mere fact that some had rioted before loosened normative constraints for others later.

Second, apart from moral considerations, previous riots facilitated later riots because riots were seen by blacks as effective instruments for desired change. They eased the way for later riots by leading people to reason, 'right or wrong, rioting works.' A fair amount of survey

⁴³ Monica D. Blumenthal, et al., Justifying Violence: Attitudes of American Men (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971), p. 23.

data supports this assertion. These surveys show that the conviction that rioting helped the cause of blacks existed among a substantial segment of the black community. In Sears and McConahay's study of the Watts riot, respondents were asked, "Do you think it [the Watts riot] helped or hurt the Negro cause?" As Table 6 shows, even among those not clearly marked off as rioters and whose answers, therefore, could not be dismissed as rationalizations of past behavior, over a third felt the riots had helped. Also the replies of whites and Mexican-Americans demonstrate that black sentiment was not merely part of some self-evident platitude shared by the whole community. But for the inclusion of these two comparison groups, one might be tempted to make this argument since the Sears and McConahay surveys were made after passage of the 1964 Civil Right Act.

Benjamin Singer's research in Detroit revealed that while in 1964 only 2 percent of blacks felt the riots had been beneficial, by 1969 40 percent were willing to express this view.⁴⁴ Finally, a study done for the Kerner

⁴⁴Benjamin D. Singer, "Mass Media and Communication Processes as Factors in the Detroit Riot of 1967," in Black Revolt, p. 357.

TABLE 6
EFFECTIVENESS OF WATTS RIOT

Responses	Black Curfew Zone	Black Arrestees	Whites	Mexican Americans
Helped	38%	54%	19%	21%
No difference, don't know	30	33	5	2
Hurt	24	9	75	75
No answer, other	8	4	1	2
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: David O. Sears and John B. McConahay, The Politics of Violence: The New Urban Blacks and the Watts Riot (Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), p. 161.⁴⁵

⁴⁵The Sears and McConahay surveys were done in 1965 and 1966.

Commission report disclosed that over a third of the respondents in the black sample, drawn from 15 American cities, felt the riots had done some good.⁴⁶ A follow-up survey asking the same respondents why they thought the riots had helped, revealed 'tangible gains' to be the most frequently cited reason (see Table 7).

The following proposition is offered on the relationship between previous and later riots:

Proposition 3: There is a positive, linear relationship between the magnitude of previous riots and the magnitude of later riots.

Governmental Capacity

Early in the chapter it was pointed out that blacks were able to cite specific greivances including general discrimination and socio-economic problems as causes for the rioting (see pp. 58-60). If this is the case, it would follow that differences in the capacity of city governments to deal with these grievances would have a bearing on the amount of racial trouble the city

⁴⁶National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), p. 49.

TABLE 7
WHY THE RIOTS HELPED

Reasons	Blacks	
	Men	Women
Tangible gains (e.g., more jobs)	19% ^a	20%
Whites understand Black problems better	14	10
Show of Negro power	9	5

^aFor brevity I have extracted only a part of a larger table given in the study. The percentages do not sum to 100 because they represent only a portion of the total sample covered in the original table.

Source: National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), p. 49.

experiences. Tangible evidence for this inference is provided by a Kerner Commission survey, in which blacks were asked if there was anything their city government could do to avoid a conflagration such as the one that had racked Detroit. As Table 8 indicates, the overwhelming majority (82% for men, 74% for women) felt something could be done to stave off a Detroit-like disturbance. Only a very small minority felt nothing would help. Proposition 4 states the hypothesized relationship between government capacity and rioting.

Proposition 4: There is a negative, linear relationship between governmental capacity and the magnitude of riots.

The variable of 'governmental capacity' is based on Gurr's variable of "institutionalization"--but only loosely. Gurr's explanation of how institutionalization relates to political violence is confusing. Institutionalization supposedly reduces violence, but just what is involved in achieving this effect is unclear. In presenting the concept Gurr explains institutionalization involves societal structures which act to reduce violence by (a) providing nonviolent outlets for pent-up hostilities, and (b) by providing alternative ways by which those things of which people are deprived can be obtained.

TABLE 8
CITY GOVERNMENT ACTION

First Responses	Blacks	
	Men	Women
Better employment	26%	24%
End discrimination	14	15
Better housing	8	8
Other social and economic improvements	7	5
Better police treatment .	6	1
Improve communications between blacks and whites; show blacks whites care	12	13
More black control of institutions	0	0
More police control	9	8
Can't do anything, have tried everything	3	5
Don't know	15	21
Total	100%	100%

Source: National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission), Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), p. 48.

The societal structures ostensibly performing both functions are, or appear to be, nongovernmental associations such as political parties and labor unions. In laying out the concept Gurr makes no mention of what is normally regarded as the government--i.e., some form of executive, be it a monarch, a president, a dictator, or whatever; or, a legislative body such as a parliament; or, perhaps, some type of bureaucracy. The confusion comes about when Gurr proceeds from defining institutionalization to presenting his operational measures of it. In addition to two expected indices of union membership and political party stability, he presents one on the government: "central government budget expenditures as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product."⁴⁷ Inclusion of this index on the government appears to mean institutionalization involves an additional, distinctly different type of social structure from the two nongovernmental ones Gurr first mentioned, and, with that new societal structure, an additional conflict-reducing function of directly relieving discontent through expenditure of government funds. While Gurr's designation of the government and its services as

⁴⁷Gurr, "A Causal Model," p. 1113.

part of institutionalization may be perfectly valid, the haphazard way in which this is done leaves one wondering about just what the concept means in Gurr's mind.

In light of this confusion, no attempt has been made to apply Gurr's conceptually vague notion of institutionalization to blacks. Instead I have borrowed from it by taking one of its suggested dimensions: the capacity of the government to take action toward relieving discontent. Governmental capacity was selected because it can be easily operationalized in terms of expenditures, and because it rests on the straightforward thesis that discontent can be neutralized by dealing with its causes--and expending money is an effective means of dealing with these causes.

Labor union activity was not selected because it is questionable whether blacks in the United States regard unions as effective groups for dealing with their problems. A nationwide Harris poll in 1963 found that only 38 percent of blacks were willing to rate unions as "more helpful" in advancing the cause of blacks, with 25 percent feeling they were "more harmful," and 37 percent saying they were "not sure." When the Harris sample was subdivided according to income, a full 50 percent of the

low income groups said they were more harmful, with 19 percent not being sure and only 31 percent willing to regard them as more helpful.⁴⁸ Presumably this ambivalence, if not hostility, stems from charges that many unions, particularly in the skilled trades, discriminate against blacks. I will not go into whether this is the real reason or whether these charges are well-founded, because these questions are not relevant for my purposes. What is relevant is that a majority of blacks did not view unions as effective instruments for improving their social conditions. This precludes regarding unions as conflict-reducing agents.

As for the other facet of institutionalization, political parties, a search of a number of sources, including census data, failed to turn up any reliable aggregate measure that would allow me to relate political parties to the rioting. Affiliation to American parties is most systematically measured in registration and voting totals. Neither of these was reported on a city-by-city basis for blacks.

⁴⁸Brink and Harris, Black and White, p. 234.

Legitimacy

The variable of legitimacy, included in Gurr's model, was not included in the present study for want of an aggregate measure of it. One plausible one that came to mind, voting turn out for blacks, could not be used for the reason just cited above.

Summary

In this chapter a model has been developed to account for why blacks in the United States rioted. A variant of Gurr's 'progressive deprivation' syndrome was selected as the best characterization for how initial discontent developed. The heart of the modified progressive deprivation model presented is the proposition that a redefinition of standards brought on by the civil rights movement was responsible for initial discontent. Several factors thought to have interacted with that discontent, either by way of translating it into violence or by reducing it, were then introduced. What remains is to operationalize the model by defining suitable aggregate measures of its components, and then to test it.

CHAPTER III

MEASUREMENT AND TESTING

In the previous chapter four separate relationships have been proposed between the magnitude of the ghetto riots, the dependent variable, and the independent variables of relative deprivation, police department size, the magnitude of previous riots, and governmental capacity. In the cases of relative deprivation, police department size, and previous riots the relationships are asserted to be positive, meaning the greater the level of each one of these variables, the greater the magnitude of the riots. In the case of governmental capacity the relationship between it and the magnitude of the riots is posited as negative, with increases in governmental capacity associated with decreases in the magnitude of the riots.

In this chapter, each of the above propositions will be tested. This will entail developing numerical indices for each of the variables, and then incorporating these indices into a single regression model.

Units of Analysis

The choice of units of analysis was dictated by the availability of Census Bureau data. Measurement of one of the independent variables, relative deprivation, entailed comparisons between the socio-economic attainments of blacks in 1950 and those in 1960. One of two possible indices of such attainments, education, was not available in the 1950 census reports except for cities in the South. The other, median income, was reported, but only for cities with populations of 100,000 or more in 1950. To make the necessary comparisons between 1950 and 1960, these cities had to become the units of analysis.

There were 169 such cities. However, a lack of data for certain variables for a number of them made it necessary to run the final regression analysis with a reduced sample of 70 cities.¹

Measures: Riot Magnitude

The dependent variable riot magnitude was measured in terms of casualties resulting from the riot.

¹United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, parts 3-42; United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population: 1960, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, parts 3-44, Tables 77 and 78.

Information was obtained on the total number of persons killed, wounded, or injured in the riots that took place between 1964 and 1968. For each riot these three figures were summed to form the composite index riot magnitude. The figures on the number of persons killed were modified by multiplying them by 1.5 since it was felt that the raw number of killed, always small relative to injured and wounded figures, did not adequately reflect the seriousness of a riot in which persons lost their lives. Data on riot casualties were obtained from the New York Times using its index, Facts of File, and the Senate Subcommittee on Investigations report, Riots: Civil and Criminal Disorders.²

Measures: Independent Variables

Relative Deprivation

As posited earlier, relative deprivation for blacks in the years prior to the riots involved an interaction between three factors, two of which have been indexed in this study: presumed growth of black

²U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations, Riots: Civil and Criminal Disorders, Hearings, before a Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Investigations, Senate, 90th Cong., 1st sess., November 1, 2, 3, and 6, 1967. Part 1. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967).

expectations stemming from a rise in living standards during the 1950's, and the gap between whites and blacks in the 1960's. Growth in living standards in the 1950's involved gains in income and education, and ideally both would be incorporated into an index of rising expectations. However, as mentioned above, to measure this rise in expectations requires figures for both 1950 and 1960, and only data on median income were available. Consequently, growth in black expectations was indexed by growth in median income. The size of this growth was computed by subtracting the 1950 Census Bureau median income figures from those of 1960. The difference between the 1950 and 1960 figures was then divided by the 1950 figure to get a percentage increase in median income score. This percentage is regarded as an index of black expectations. Since the Kerner Commission surveys revealed that the overwhelming majority of the rioters were male (typically over 90 percent) the data on median income were gathered for black males only.

The second measureable element of relative deprivation is the white-black gap, which will here be termed "discrimination." For each city discrimination was measured by subtracting black male median income for 1960

from total male median income for 1960. Ideally figures from white males only would be used in computing the discrimination score. However, the Census Bureau did not provide such.

To capture the essence of relative deprivation as stemming from an interaction between expectations and discrimination, with both factors being necessary for relative deprivation, the final relative deprivation index was computed by multiplying the expectations score by the discrimination score.

Coercive Force

The social control variable of coercive force was measured in terms of the size of the city police department. Information on police department size was obtained from the Uniform Crime Reports for the United States for 1967,³ compiled by the Department of Justice, and from The Municipal Yearbook 1970.⁴

³U.S. Department of Justice, Uniform Crime Reports for the United States 1967 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 74-75.

⁴The International City Management Association, The Municipal Yearbook 1970 (Washington, D.C.: City Management Association, 1970), pp. 450-469.

Facilitation

A prior riots index was constructed by summing the riot magnitude scores of each city for the years from 1964 to 1967. To test Proposition 3, which held that previous riots paved the way for later ones, prior riots was added to the other independent variables in a special equation in which the dependent variables was the magnitude of the 1968 riots.

Governmental Capacity

To test the fourth proposition which predicts a negative relationship between governmental capacity and the magnitude of the riots, two separate variables were created to represent governmental capacity. The first was welfare expenditures by the city government in 1960; the second, total government expenditures by the city in 1960 for services other than welfare. For both variables the hypothesized relationship between them and riot magnitude is negative and linear. Data for welfare and total government expenditures were obtained from the City and County Data Book for 1962.⁵

⁵United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, City and County Data Book 1962 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), Tables 451 & 452.

The choice of welfare expenditures to index governmental capacity seemed obvious. Such expenditures seemed a straightforward application of the principle behind governmental capacity: channeling government resources directly to deprived individuals. In light of the well-known poverty of blacks, it seemed a safe assumption that a substantial segment of such deprived individuals would be black, although the City and County Data Book--the most systematic compilation of welfare figures that could be found--did not provide information of what proportion of a city's welfare expenditures went to blacks.

Total government expenditures represents money spent on public transportation, sanitation, parks, and hospitals. The choice of it as an index of governmental capacity did not seem as obvious since the services involved are not expressly intended to assist the poor. However, since the poor are disproportionately dependent on services such as public transportation to help them in getting jobs, or public hospitals because they cannot afford expensive private ones, it was felt that including expenditures on these nonwelfare types of services was

necessary to get a complete picture of a city's effort to deal with the grievances of deprived persons.

Control Variables

A control variable, black population in 1960, was added to the other independent variables. This is to separate out trivial relationships between the dependent variable and the independent variables of police department size, welfare, and total government expenditures. Riot magnitude will naturally correlate with the size of the black population alone. The more blacks in a city, the bigger the riot. And, the size of each of the three independent variables just mentioned will also correlate with black population, since each will be greater for larger cities and the larger the city, typically, the larger the black population. If black population were not inserted as a control, we would observe strong but trivial relationships between riot magnitude and the three independent variables due to the number of blacks in the city.

The Regression Models

A regression model is a statistical equation specifying a positive or negative linear relationship between

a dependent variable, set on the left-hand side of the equation, and one or more independent variables, set on the right-hand side. A regression coefficient is computed for each independent variable. The regression coefficient indicates the direction of the linear relationship between its associated independent variable and the dependent variable when all other independent variables in the equation have been held constant. 'Holding constant' is a statistical procedure for separating out the effects of a given independent variable on the dependent variable from the effects of other independent variables on the same dependent variable. Because the procedure is incorporated into the computation of the regression coefficient, the regression coefficient, if statistically significant, tells us that a relationship which cannot be accounted for in terms of the other independent variables exists between its respective independent variable and the dependent variable; conversely, if such a relationship does exist, the regression coefficient will not be statistically significant.

In this study each of the four propositions presented above holds that a statistically significant relationship of a specified nature, either positive or

negative, will exist between a certain independent variable and riot magnitude after the other independent variables have been held constant. So, for example, proposition 1 posits that a relationship exists between relative deprivation and riot magnitude after police department size, prior riots, total government expenditures, and welfare expenditures have been held constant; proposition 2 asserts that a relationship exists between police department size and riot magnitude after relative deprivation, prior riots, and so forth, have been held constant. Regression analysis is the appropriate statistical procedure for testing propositions of this sort. Accordingly, each of the above indices will be incorporated into a regression model, with the regression coefficient being used to test the proposition relating each of the indices for the independent variables to riot magnitude.

Restating each proposition in the language of the regression model, proposition 1 predicts that the regression coefficient for relative deprivation will be significant and positive; proposition 2 asserts that the coefficient for police department size will be significant and positive; proposition 3 predicts the coefficient for

prior riots will be significant and positive; and proposition 4 holds that the coefficients for total government expenditures and welfare expenditures will be significant and negative.

Each proposition will be regarded as falsified if either of two conditions is met: First, the regression coefficient is statistically significant, but the sign of the coefficient indicates the relationship is not in the predicted direction. Second, the regression coefficient is not statistically significant. Statistical significance will be set at the .05 level. For propositions 1, 2, and 4 the following regression model is specified.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{EQ1:} \quad \text{RM} = & A_0 + \beta_1(\text{RD}) + \beta_2(\text{PDS}) + \beta_3(\text{WEXP}) \\ & + \beta_4(\text{TGEXP}) + \beta_5(\text{BP}) + e \end{aligned}$$

where

RM = Riot Magnitude

RD = Relative Deprivation (+)*

PDS = Police Department Size (+)

WEXP = Welfare Expenditures (-)

TGEXP = Total Government Expenditures (-)

BP = Black Population (+)

*Pluses and minuses represent the predicted direction of the relationship between the variable and riot magnitude.

To test proposition 3, which predicted a positive relationship between the magnitude of previous riots and later riots, the following model is specified.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{EQ2:} \quad \text{RM68} = & A_0 + \beta_1(\text{RD}) + \beta_2(\text{PDS}) + \beta_3(\text{WEXP}) \\ & + \beta_4(\text{TGEXP}) + \beta_5(\text{BP}) + \beta_6(\text{PR}) + e \end{aligned}$$

where

RM68 = Riot Magnitude for 1968

PR = The total magnitude of prior riots from
1964 to 1967 (+)

TABLE 9
CORRELATION MATRIX FOR EQUATION 1_a

	RM	RD	PDS	WEXP	TGEXP	BP
RM	1.0	-.07	.42	.38	.57	.64
RD		1.00	.01	-.06	-.07	-.02
PDS			1.00	.90	.93	.92
WEXP				1.00	.95	.79
TGEXP					1.00	.92
BP						1.00

Results of Regression Analysis:
Equation 1

$$\begin{aligned} \text{EQ1}_a : \quad \text{RM} = & -32890 + 25(\text{RD}) - .07(\text{PDS}) - 52(\text{WEXP}) \\ & (.18)* \quad (3.98)*** \quad (2.81)*** \\ & + 12(\text{TGEXP}) + 83(\text{BP}) \\ & (4.03)*** \quad (1.89)** \end{aligned}$$

* Not significant at the .25 level.

** Significant at the .05 level.

*** Significant at the .005 level.

$$R^2 = .69 \quad F = 29.6 \quad N = 70$$

The scores in parentheses below the variables are the t scores.

As the reader can readily observe, Proposition 1, which predicted a positive relationship between relative deprivation and the magnitude of the riots, has been refuted. While the relationship between relative deprivation and riot magnitude is in the predicted direction, it fails to attain statistical significance by a wide margin. The chances are better than one out of four that the true regression coefficient is 0--i.e., no relationship whatsoever.

Proposition 2, positing a positive relationship between riot magnitude and coercive force as measured by

police department size, has also been refuted. One possible explanation of this finding that would be consistent with proposition 2 is that, while greater police department size did have the specified effect of generating more hostile police-citizen encounters, when the riots broke out it had an even stronger effect of stifling violence--hence, the observed negative relationship. This, however, is speculation, and is offered simply as grist for other analytic mills. It should not be construed as an attempt to 'save the theory.' In light of the observed negative relationships, the conclusion must be that proposition 2 stands as falsified.

The results for proposition 4 are mixed, though one might argue that, on balance, they support it. The relationship between riot magnitude and total government expenditures is significant, but is not in the predicted direction. On the other hand, the more direct measure of a city government's capacity to deal with grievances, welfare expenditures, is significant and is in the predicted direction.

The explanation here may be that cities with more serious problems of black deprivation spent more to relieve it through better public services. However, except

when channeled into the more direct measure of welfare, such expenditures did little good. Another approach to interpreting the results would be simply to forgo any attempt to explain the positive relationship between riot magnitude and total government expenditures, and to ask the question of which of the two variables is a more valid measure of a government's capacity to deal with black grievances. If one regards welfare expenditures as the more valid of the two, then proposition 4 has escaped disconfirmation; if one regards total government expenditures as more valid, then it has not. If neither is seen as valid, the question is left unresolved one way or the other.

TABLE 10
CORRELATION MATRIX FOR EQUATION 2_a

	RM68	RD	PDS	WEXP	TGEXP	BP	PR
RM68	1.0	-.10	.25	.34	.50	.46	.04
RD		1.00	.01	-.06	-.07	-.02	-.00
PDS			1.00	.90	.93	.92	.37
WEXP				1.00	.95	.79	.19
TGEXP					1.00	.92	.32
BP						1.00	.47
PR							1.00

Results of Regression Analysis:
Equation 2

$$\begin{aligned} \text{EQ2}_a: \quad \text{RM68} = & -36203 + .06(\text{RD}) - 1.67(\text{PDS}) - 1.04(\text{WEXP}) \\ & (.97)* \quad (6.93)*** \quad (3.11)** \\ & + 2.79(\text{TGEXP}) + .35(\text{BP}) - .19(\text{PR}) \\ & (6.30)*** \quad (1.19)* \quad (2.66)** \end{aligned}$$

* Not significant at the .1 level.

** Significant at the .005 level.

*** Significant at the .001 level.

$$R^2 = .76 \quad F = 34.4 \quad N = 69$$

In equation 2_a the magnitude of the riots a city experienced in 1968 was regressed against prior riots, measured in terms of the magnitude of the riots that took place in a city during the years from 1963 to 1967. Proposition 3 held that the magnitude of the 1968 riot would be positively related to past riots, and it has been disconfirmed. While the relationship is significant, as shown in Equation 2_a, it is negative rather than positive. One might explain this negative relationship by arguing that the riots a city experienced in past years took a sufficiently heavy toll in casualties and property damage to deter people from rioting again; and/or, the riots induced the city government to implement social reforms that removed the motive for the riots.

Further Analysis

In reporting proposition 1 on relative deprivation to have been disconfirmed no explanations were offered, because none could be thought of. Considerable effort was expended to develop a relative deprivation theory that seemed to fit the social circumstances and experiences of blacks in the United States, and that stood the best chance of explaining the riots. It did not. The theory of relative deprivation offered in this study has been falsified when tested against this body of evidence.

Not as a means of rescuing the relative deprivation hypothesis but merely for exploratory purposes, two other models were tested. They differed from Equation 1 only in the way in which relative deprivation was defined. In the first model, relative deprivation was defined in terms of growth in median income alone. For want of a better term this might be called a "truncated" progressive deprivation model in that no frustrating element analogous to perception of white-black differences is being identified. The proposition here is the loose and open-ended one that growth was in some way behind the riots, but just how this normally satisfying development

of increasing income turned into a basis for violence is being left to speculation.

TABLE 11
CORRELATION MATRIX FOR EQUATION 3

	RM	RDG	PDS	WEXP	TGEXP	BP
RM	1.0	.10	.42	.38	.57	.64
RDG		1.00	.03	-.002	.01	.03
PDS			1.00	.90	.93	.93
WEXP				1.00	.95	.75
TGEXP					1.00	.92
BP						1.00

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{EQ3: } RM = & -80190 + 111.5(RDG)^{\dagger} - .07(PDS) - 50(WEXP) \\
 & (1.11)* \quad (4.09)**** \quad (2.70)*** \\
 & + 12(TGEXP) + 87(BP) \\
 & (3.94)**** \quad (2.0)**
 \end{aligned}$$

* Not significant at the .1 level.

** Significant at the .025 level.

*** Significant at the .005 level.

**** Significant at the .001 level.

† Relative deprivation defined as growth in median income, 1950-1960.

$$R^2 = .70 \quad F = 30.5 \quad N = 70$$

Here with Equation 3 we see that, while the relationship of relative deprivation defined as growth to

riot magnitude is in the predicted direction, it is not statistically significant. The chances are better than one out of ten that no relationship at all exists.

A second model was tested, identical to the one above except that relative deprivation was defined solely in terms of discrimination--the white-black gap. The proposition here would be that prior expectations generated by growth had nothing to do with the riots. Relative deprivation was solely in terms of blacks feeling deprived relative to whites, and the greater the gap between the two groups, the greater the magnitude of the riots.

TABLE 12
CORRELATION MATRIX FOR EQUATION 4

	RM	RDD	PDS	WEXP	TGEXP	BP
RM	1.0	-.19	.42	.38	.58	.64
RDD		1.00	-.04	-.09	-.13	-.09
PDS			1.00	.90	.93	.92
WEXP				1.00	.95	.79
TGEXP					1.00	.92
BP						1.00

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{EQ4:} \quad \text{RM} = & -104 - 12(\text{RDD})^{\dagger} - .07(\text{PDS}) - 52(\text{WEXP}) \\
 & \quad \quad \quad (.33)^{*} \quad \quad \quad (4.00)^{****} \quad \quad (2.85)^{***} \\
 & + 12(\text{TGEXP}) + 83(\text{BP}) \\
 & \quad \quad \quad (4.00)^{****} \quad \quad (1.95)^{**}
 \end{aligned}$$

* Not significant at the .25 level.

** Significant at the .025 level.

*** Significant at the .005 level.

**** Significant at the .001 level.

† Relative deprivation defined as
"discrimination."

$$R^2 = .70 \quad F = 31.7 \quad N = 74$$

Here again, in Equation 4, one finds no support for the relative deprivation variable. Not only is the relationship not statistically significant, it is negative rather than positive as predicted.

Summary and Conclusions

This study was conceived as means of providing a test of Gurr's relative deprivation theory of political violence. Gurr's own test of his theory was done on a cross-national basis, using aggregate measures for each of his variables, including relative deprivation. By choosing a multinational sample, Gurr was forced to adopt a least common denominator approach to measuring relative deprivation; an approach that resulted in measures so

general as to render his final results--which Gurr says support his relative deprivation model--equally consistent with a rival and more parsimonious absolute deprivation, or misery model.

In reaction to this, the present study proceeded from the premise that, if variables defined in terms of aggregate measures are to be used owing to problems with direct survey measurement of 'states of mind,' relative deprivation should be defined with respect to the particular pattern of conditions by which it developed. Of the three patterns presented by Gurr--aspirational, progressive, and decremental--at least the aspirational and progressive forms are sufficiently diverse in their empirically measureable properties to allow them to be distinguished from the rival misery model on the basis of aggregate measures alone. This implies focusing on only one case of political violence, which can then be closely examined to determine which pattern of relative deprivation was most likely involved. Using aggregate measures appropriate for that pattern, one can construct statistical models which, when tested, will yield evidence that clearly corroborates or refutes the relative deprivation thesis.

Following this procedure, the ghetto riots in the United States were singled out. A survey of previous studies of the riots made clear that, if relative deprivation was responsible for the riots, it would have been in the form of progressive deprivation. Gains blacks made in the form of increased incomes and higher educational attainments ruled out other forms, including the misery model. However, unlike the progressive deprivation pattern specified by Gurr, the frustrating element for blacks was not a precipitous decline of value capabilities. No evidence was encountered that incomes or educational attainments had dropped off before riots broke out. Frustration, rather, came in the form of a sudden change in the standards by which blacks assessed their value attainments. The dramatic and rapid success of the civil rights movement induced them to think suddenly in terms of equality with whites. This frustrated prior expectations, generated by growth in income and education during the 1950's, of achieving a satisfactory social status.

In accord with this, a regression model was constructed in which relative deprivation was defined as a product of growth in median incomes for black men between

1950 and 1960 and the size of the gap separating black from white men on median income as of 1960. Three other variables--coercive force, facilitation, and governmental capacity--were defined and included in the regression model along with relative deprivation.

In light of the results obtained, the main conclusion is that relative deprivation did not play a role in inducing blacks to riot. A significant relationship was not found between the variables relative deprivation and riot magnitude.

Similarly disconfirming results were observed for other variables with the possible exception of governmental capacity. That was indexed by total government expenditures and by welfare expenditures. The latter did bear a significant relationship to ghetto riots, and, if because of its character as a more direct instrument for dealing with grievances, it can be regarded as a more valid measure of governmental capacity, then the proposition that governmental capacity is negatively related to the magnitude of riots has not been falsified.

One would hesitate to say that this study totally and conclusively refutes Gurr's theory. If nothing else, methodological error can always be charged, and such

charges must be taken especially seriously in a study using aggregate data to tap psychological phenomena. The stipulation that 'further tests are necessary,' is, alas, as necessary as it is trite. Ideally these tests would employ direct psychological measures of hypothesized states of frustration and anger. However, if they are based on inferential aggregate measures, they should focus on single instances of political violence that allow for careful specification of the form relative deprivation took. In any case, pending such tests, the present study is offered as at least one piece of negative evidence to be weighed as one ponders the question of just why men rebel.

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